



**UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

**AN EVALUATION OF RURAL HOUSING POLICY  
AND IMPLEMENTATION: TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF APPROPRIATE RURAL HOUSING THAT CONTRIBUTES TO  
LOCAL IDENTITY AND REGIONAL DIVERSITY. A CASE STUDY OF  
MPUKUNYONI AREA IN KZN- SOUTH AFRICA**

**BY:**

**BUSISIWE P. BUTHELEZI**

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**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF MASTERS IN HOUSING  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL IN THE SCHOOL OF  
ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND HOUSING**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study is mainly characterised by social, cultural, and economic aspects that influence the housing typology and design in rural areas, since these places have been in a critical condition compared to urban areas. This has led to the use of design suitable for urban areas in rural areas. This act threatens to undermine rural characteristics such as rural settlement patterns and traditional housing which acknowledge people's origin and lifestyle. As a result, people fail to contribute to their own development mainly because of the technological advancement that acquires people with intensive skills.

The study was conducted in the rural community of Mpukunyoni in Mtubatuba. The residents still live under the traditional leadership of Inkosi Mkhwanazi. The housing project implemented in the area highlight some complications because of the housing typology that the developers have used which fails to incorporate cultural meaning in them. This questions the role played by the community which sees enabling approach as a possible solution. It encourages people themselves to be gradually drawn into their development. It also alleviates poor conditions and empowers people to restore their human dignity while recognising their potential.

The study sees a need for rural housing policy to be reevaluated so as to include other relevant factors like incorporating traditional authorities in decision making so as to influence the policy makers to recognise cultural aspects because rural and urban areas are not the same therefore, they must be treated differently. In that way, the developers can have a clear understanding of what housing means to rural people so as to provide them with housing that must be passed on from one generation to the other.

## DECLARATION

This dissertation is my own work, and has not been submitted in part or in whole, to any other academic institution. The study was carried out under the supervision of Professor Ambrose Adebayo from University of KwaZulu-Natal

Signature 

Date 28/04/06

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

KZN-	KWAZULU-NATAL
IDP-	INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN
PLS-	PROJECT LINKED SUBSIDIES
NGO-	NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION
ITB-	INGONYAMA TRUST BOARD
LUM-	LAND USE MANAGEMENT
DFA-	DEVELOPMENT FACILITATION ACT
GB-	GRAMEEN BANK
CLGF-	COMMONWEALTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM
DPLG-	DEPARTMENT OF PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
EPWP-	EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME
PHP-	PEOPLE'S HOUSING PROCESS

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This study attempts to suggest guidelines for developing a more appropriate rural housing design that is suitable for rural communities who still live under tribal authority. Rural housing design has to take into consideration the needs of people, their sense of belonging and lifestyles. It also has to reflect a clear understanding of the beneficiary's social and cultural status. The theoretical framework clarifies the importance and use of indigenous architecture in rural areas, which features variables such as culture, local tradition, language, and construction materials used. These variables play a very important role in shaping the lives of the beneficiaries. Socio-anthropological research forms part of the study to elicit information about the importance of using appropriate rural housing design that reflects the settlement patterns, tradition and culture of rural dwellers.

The study looks at the housing type that has been implemented in rural areas in relation to the understanding of the cultural impulses and constraints that influence people's perception of shelter and design variables. The use of design suitable for urban areas in rural areas threatens to undermine the social and cultural integrity of residents in rural areas. It is a fact that the way houses are built is influenced by social, structural, historical and cultural meanings of the designed environment (Low, 1989).

Rural areas need to be approached differently from urban areas because the kind of housing they require is that which incorporates their history and cultural values. Mpukunyoni area in Northern KwaZulu-Natal will be used as a case study area to evaluate the type of housing that has been implemented to fulfil the needs of rural housing and improve rural people's living conditions. Housing design can be conceptualised as meaningful social and cultural objects used

to demarcate space, express feelings, ways of thinking, and social processes.

Sowman and Urquhart (1998) argue that there is a need to create living environments that truly promote human development. Therefore, more integrated or enabling approaches permit housing to play a powerful role as a development agent. This development puts people first and makes them participate fully in matters that influence and improve people's lives.

## **1.2. Background of the study**

During the apartheid period, rural areas were neglected as they were faced with poverty which made it difficult for rural dwellers to improve their living conditions especially in housing. The housing that was built at the time was culturally friendly and totally different to those in urban areas in a sense that rural communities made all the choices for their housing type design and used local material for construction. Consequently, rural areas were faced with housing backlog as they did not receive any assistance from the state. These issues negatively impacted settlement in rural areas and contributed to delays in housing and service delivery processes.

The post apartheid period has been a turning point for South African citizens, especially those that were affected by legislation such as the Group Areas Act, which segregated people according to their race.

The present South African government has identified a need to introduce rural housing programs to ensure access to housing opportunities as a means of addressing past imbalances. In the Mpukunyoni area, the Provincial Government has provided rural housing subsidies, aimed especially at women. The planning and delivery processes are driven by the developers who are expected to have extensive knowledge when dealing with housing issues, including

design. However it is also crucial for developers to understand the resident's social structures, which affect their housing needs.

### **1.3. Research problem**

Rural housing is one of the topical issues that is heading the agenda in the national, provincial and local spheres. It is estimated that in KwaZulu-Natal almost 50% of the population live in rural areas (Mthembu, 2001). There has therefore been a need for the delivery of affordable housing within a largely rural context. To this end, the government has identified the need to allocate housing subsidies to rural communities so as to open up access to housing opportunities as a way of addressing the past imbalances.

When dealing with rural housing it is necessary to have precise and accurate knowledge of the existing situation before trying to bring about development to improve life. There have been some transformations in the traditional settlement patterns in the hope of creating a modern society by reorganisation and rebuilding. This reveals a cultural heritage of sophistication and ecological balance that has too long been ignored by the majority of developers. Andersen (1977) argues that planners and developers tend to look abroad for solutions to the planning of rural housing and as a result, the traditional values of village life are lost (Andersen, 1977).

The study in particular, addresses problems associated with the developer-driven approach, which fails to package housing projects on basis of Integrated Development Plan (IDP) that is prepared by the District Municipalities. IDP involves local communities and allows them to choose housing design that contributes meaningfully to their lives and culture. The developer-driven approach shows that the developers are concerned with top structure as an end product and not as a process; therefore they ignore the input of the beneficiaries. They lack an understanding of the determining factors, issues, needs

and settlement forms in rural areas. Rural housing as a form of human settlement has to involve local people in the project and allow them to choose a housing design of their choice.

In rural areas, housing projects are packaged in areas that are still under the authority of '**Amakhosi**' (tribal authorities). Amakhosi are in charge of the tribal land. Housing has been provided to fulfil the need to improve the living conditions of local communities. It is still problematic to identify or state what is culturally suitable for the rural communities in terms of housing, specifically with regards to their local culture and lifestyles.

The concern around the way projects are carried out in rural areas, for example using approaches more suited to urban areas, is a debatable one. These approaches threaten to undermine the social structure and cultural integrity of rural people. For instance, rural people live with extended family, which calls for a housing design that accommodates this aspect. Therefore, the use of cultural built environment enables one to 'see' rural areas through the eyes of their inhabitants and to arrive at an understanding of their use and meaning as defined by those inhabitants.

There has been growing interest among developers that develop rural housing for economic gain. It has been observed that a number of projects in rural areas are packaged haphazardly by the developers provided they stand to gain economically. At the end of the project, lack of understanding projects in rural areas results in inappropriate concepts. This does not allow for community empowerment as the projects were imposed on the community.

Even planners assume that rural planning can easily be derived from standardised urban planning approaches. However, the character of rural territory and populations suggests that this is inappropriate.

Rural planning requires a radically different conception and approach. To illustrate, urban planning usually assumes systematic and condensed or compact growth of the constructed physical environment, while rural planning on the other hand must often contend with declining population and widely scattered growth. Most trained urban professionals or planners tend to be ineffective when dealing with rural situations because they are unable to apply the sophisticated concepts used to fit the rural setting. Therefore, additional understanding of rural society, institutions and environment is essential to rural dwellers (Lassey, 1977). For instance, the developers working within the tribal areas need to be aware of polygamous households so as to consider social organisation and practices of the beneficiaries.

Mpukunyoni has been chosen as a case study because of the housing projects that have taken place in two wards, the Ngqopheni and Nkombose areas. The Mpukunyoni area itself consists of the rural communities that still live according to the traditional style of the Zulus. Essentially, the study sees a need to introduce well structured housing that suits rural beneficiaries for which it is designed. There is a need for rural housing to be designed in such a way that the residents themselves (the beneficiaries) are gradually drawn into the mainstream of housing provision action. The rural housing design used at Mpukunyoni needs to show the preservation of the Zulu culture so as to make people aware of their roots and the uniqueness of the area.

#### **1.4. Project justification**

The residents of Mpukunyoni are among the first people to benefit from the rural housing subsidy scheme provided by the Provincial government. This has motivated the researcher to evaluate how the rural housing design has been incorporated in the packaging process so as to reflect rural people's culture and lifestyle.

The author has seen a need to suggest guidelines for developing a more appropriate rural housing that is suitable for rural communities. Therefore, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge in this field and will then call for the housing policy to be revisited so as to satisfy the needs of rural communities. At present, the professionals responsible for packaging housing projects in rural communities, lack an adequate theoretical framework regarding information related to the provision of appropriate rural housing design. Therefore, these guidelines will contribute tremendously to the existing information.

### **1.5. Research Question**

How can the rural housing delivery system under current housing policy respond to the cultural needs and values of the rural communities?

#### **1.5.1. Subsidiary questions**

- What is the position of the current rural housing policy regarding developing appropriate rural housing design?
- Does the housing typology that has been implemented in rural areas contribute to local identity?
- Are these housing types appropriate to people's culture, life style and tradition?
- If not, what factors can contribute to appropriate design for rural communities?
- How best can community participation influence the choice of housing in rural areas?

- How can rural housing policy ensure that developers understand contextual issues in rural setting by considering the needs of people, their sense of belonging and lifestyles?

### **1.6. Hypothesis**

The housing delivery and design that is appropriate in rural areas is one that contributes to a sense of local identity and regional diversity. It is noted that cultural history is growing, but the natural and historical diversity is still pressured by globalisation.

### **1.7. Aim and objectives of the study**

The main aim of the study is to scrutinise the housing designs that are developed in rural areas in relation to socio-structural, historical and cultural meanings of designed environment. The study also looks at the role that local community plays in influencing the choice of housing in rural areas.

The main objectives of the study are:

- To identify problems associated with designs that are suitable for urban areas, but which threaten to undermine social and cultural integrity of rural communities, and make developers understand issues relating to rural settings.
- To identify strategies upon which rural housing policy can be formulated to reflect rural people's settlement patterns, traditions and cultural meanings on housing.
- To suggest guidelines for developing a more appropriate rural housing design that is suitable for rural communities who still live under tribal authority.

### **1.8. Definition of key concepts for the study**

The key concepts for the study are very broad in the sense that they can be used differently to define different things. In order to avoid

ambiguity this study has come up with a working definition for each concept so as to clarify meanings.

The study concepts are defined as follows:

**a. Rural Housing**

*“Rural housing is a variety of processes through which habitable, stable, and sustainable public and private residential environments are created for viable households and communities. The environment in which a house is situated and the design used is as important as the house itself in satisfying the needs and requirements of the occupants” (National Housing Policy, 1994).*

*“Housing is more than a roof and four walls. Our society needs to shift its thinking from housing as a commodity to housing as a human right and from buildings of houses to building of community” (Adler, 1991)*

It is a physical structure that shelters people in the pursuit of their private lives. There is no standard definition for housing, but in this study, rural housing is defined in a Zulu cultural context as the way rural people construct meanings that transcend the physical boundaries of their shelter, by defining their history and cultural values. Rural housing also uses natural material for construction; there is no legal ownership of land and no indoor services. Rapoport, (1969) defines housing as a tool used to prolong the life of the ideals, values, attitudes, and images of the specific traditional society as a whole (Rapoport, 1969).

A holistic definition of rural housing includes: An integrated system of housing activities that takes place within the social, economic and cultural context in the community. This system ensures that rural people have access to adequate space and privacy; physical accessibility; sufficient security of tenure; structural stability and

durability; adequate basic infrastructure, suitable environmental quality and health-related factors; and accessible location with regard to work and basic facilities. All of the above mentioned factors are available at an affordable cost since they are essential to one's physical, psychological, social, economic and cultural well-being. Rural housing ensures that there is sustainability of human life and settlements by making rural areas economically efficient, socially equitable and environmentally sound, with full respect for cultural, religious and natural heritage and diversity.

The most important aspects of rural housing specialise in promoting and improving planning, design, construction material used and maintenance of the existing self-built housing through better access to available housing resources, including finance, design techniques and local building materials, in accordance with local norms and standards. Rural housing also facilitates gender-sensitive participation of the various actors involved in housing projects at all levels and stages of decision making. These ensure equal rights of women and men related to land and decision making when choosing housing type design suitable for rural dwellers.

### **b. Culture**

Verhelst and Tyndale (2000) define culture as “the complex whole of knowledge, wisdom, values, attitudes, customs and multiple resources which a community has inherited, adopted or created in order to flourish in the context of its social and natural environment. It is being constituted solely of observable social structural patterns on human behaviour. Rules of behaviour are collectively described as those social structures, particularly socio-political and economic which order and pattern behaviour according to cultural standards”.

According to this study, culture is defined as the way people behave (lifestyle), think, what they believe and value and how they interpret

the world. These things then influence their response to and creation of shelter and housing environments.

It has been noted that there is difference between the cultures; values, rules and perspectives of the designers and the beneficiaries. This then results in culturally inappropriate assumptions about the lifestyles, needs and responses of the potential end users.

### **c. Local identity**

Local identity is a list of characteristics that makes a place unique from others. This list cannot be separated from cultural history that consists of both cultural and social developments, which manifest one's architectural and scenic heritage.

Local identity of an area is formed by the current characteristic elements and patterns combined with the personal value that people assign to it. The surroundings are therefore not a random collection of exchangeable materials, but rather a specific combination of elements that have their own history and meaning.

### **d. Regional diversity**

It expresses the complementary nature of cultural understanding and spatial expression found in different geographical areas. The things that cause differences and similarities due to ethnographic methodologies that link the physical environment, which include house, community or region with the cultural codes that lie beneath the surface of spatial configurations and building patterns. Design environments can be created by farming techniques, direct human intervention based on cultural traditions or historical context.

### **e. Socio-cultural processes**

Refers to organisational structure of the society, community, and leadership are shaped by values on how people live their lives. These

are the processes that determine why certain communities have certain types of housing design.

Housing is a cultural process and a social activity. The relation between form and cultural values creates a structure for behaviour that is compelling. Rural housing deals with the designers and their designs that transform individuals who occupy houses by making them behave in a certain way, carrying the effects of power right to the housing designs so as to make it possible to know and alter them (Foucault, 1975).

Rapoport (1969) as cited by Bevan and Mitchell (1992:26) regards socio-cultural factors as more important than climate, techniques, and materials in their effects on house form. House form is used to extend and prolong life of the ideals, values, attitudes and images of the specific traditional societies. Housing is not only a physical object with functional attributes it also reflects a traditional societies worldview, ethics, and codes of behaviour. However, in rural areas the relationship between groups is regarded as culturally distinctive due to being involved with the sense of belonging or affiliation to a cultural-linguistic group and the uniqueness of such group. The sense of belonging denotes a social identity which is both collective and individual, externalised in social interactions, personal self-awareness and publicly expressed (Jenkins, 1999). The people have a sense of common historical origin, shared culture, language, value orientation, shared social norms, and sometimes religion (Schermerhorn, 1996).

Rapoport (1969) further argues that socio-cultural influences can be divided into several categories including basic needs, family, the position of women, the need for privacy and social intercourse culture, which form an integral part of any community and should be considered at all times (Mitchel and Bevan, 1992). Social and cultural factors are usually the last to be considered by designers and

builders. If they are from the society for which they are building, they know what is expected culturally from the building, perhaps without even a need to articulate these requirements. If they are from outside the community, builders tend to misunderstand the aspirations of the people for whom they are building.

### **1.9. Socio-economic aspects associated with rural housing**

In rural areas there are many social and economic dynamics that come to play when packaging projects for development. Such dynamics cannot be ignored because they form the basis of what people value within their communities and how they expect projects to be undertaken according to what they know and have. Carnea (1991) has defined interlocked defects that stand out in the process of generating, analysing and using social information in rural development in the normal development and professional practice.

Poorer people have been easily neglected, as they are people that are not organised, do not complain or resist and are politically, difficult to persuade. Poor people are known as the powerless, isolated and silent and as a result their priorities and needs are always taken for granted (Mthembu, 2001). It is the developer's responsibility to ensure that communities participate fully in the development. However, lack of local input regarding the housing design result in housing and related facilities that do not meet needs and demands of the beneficiaries.

In most developing countries such as South Africa, men have largely been identified as being breadwinners and heading households. This is due to the fact that most men are employed in the formal sector while women work in informal sector. Oruwari (1991) argued that the economic contribution of women working in informal sector is often greater and yet they are not recognized. As a result the housing development issues are designed solely around the needs of the male labour force and neglect aspects of location, design and planning

crucial to facilitating the large input of women to the family economy. As a result women's rights are violated as they are not given enough control to voice their opinions on how to design and build their homes since they spend most of the time working from homes (Oruwari, 1991).

The information on rural areas has been acquired, owned and analysed mainly by the outsiders (Mthembu, 2001). This then affects the process of delivery which should involve local people with regards to what they want since they are the ones with local knowledge of the conditions that affect their lives. There is a need to incorporate rural people in order to get their own definition of desirable outcomes.

#### **1.10. Brief description of the study area**

Mtubatuba is roughly 200 km North of Durban. It is a town that is perfectly located to act as a base from which to explore the rich culture of the Zulu Nation and world renowned game reserves and the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park about 25 km away.

Mpukunyoni area was selected as the study because of its main features which relate most to the topic of the research. These features include its rural nature, traditional housing, tribal leadership and traditional lifestyle.

#### **1.11. Research Methodology**

##### **1.11.1. Introduction**

The methodology used to acquire research in this study is a reflection of how the researcher planned to structure the whole research process. This forms a guideline that will be followed in conducting the study especially for data collection and data analysis. The methodology will show the instruments that were used when collecting data and the subjects for the study as well as the reasons why they were selected.

### **1.11.2. Relevance of the study**

Development in the rural areas requires care, patience and knowledge and has been sidelined. Working with the rural communities demands the developer concerned to listen to the members. Kodua-Agye (1997) argues that, in order to achieve any objectives of any rural development strategy, it is necessary to evaluate the previous and the ongoing projects. What is crucial is that rural development constraints should be diagnosed on the basis of planning for the future.

### **1.11.3. Sources of information**

#### **1.11.3.1 Secondary Sources**

Secondary sources of information were firstly used to gather documented information in the study. This included the following:

- Relevant Books
- Journals articles
- Government Publications- such as important governmental documents in relation to rural housing.
- Department of Housing in KwaZulu-Natal- documentary sources, collection of records and mass media material that have been collected in the field on rural housing design over the past years.
- Articles relevant to the study
- The Internet
- Previous dissertations relevant to the topic

These sources was accessed through libraries i.e. University of KwaZulu-Natal libraries, and government institutions. Government departments were consulted for maps and public documents. Basically the above-mentioned material enabled the researcher to get a clear understanding of the context in which rural housing design has been, and is currently being carried out. This also gave rise to the nature of questions to be included in the interview schedule.

### **1.11.3.2. Primary Sources**

#### **1.11.3.2.1. Research Tools**

This study was both qualitative and quantitative research consisting of different tools, such as interviews and questionnaires, to elicit information from respondents. Interviews were conducted with key informants and local residents. With the respondent's permission, tape recording was used during interviews.

#### **1.11.3.2.2. Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the following people:

- Director (policy) from Provincial Housing Department: To provide useful information in understanding the strategies concerning the current housing policy in relation to the development of appropriate rural housing design that contributes to local identity.
- Project manager from Mtubatuba Local Municipality: To provide information about role players (people involved in the housing project) and the decision-making process regarding project implementation. Questions asked would revolve around housing design, how they arrived at the current housing design used, and the extent to which rural housing projects are made to incorporate the cultural identity of the rural communities.
- Tribal authority (Inkosi): To elicit information about the relationship between tribal authorities and the local authorities, to assess whether there are any challenges that they face with regard to rural housing implementation.

#### **1.11.3.2.3. Selection of the participants**

The respondents were selected using the Random Sampling method. This method is the purest form of probability sampling whereby each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected randomly.

#### **1.11.3.2.4. Questionnaires**

Questionnaires with both open ended as well as closed questions were administered to the beneficiaries selected using the Random Sampling method in the Mpukunyoni area. The researcher used two wards, choosing half of the respondents from both sides. Therefore, 60 respondents were selected so as to get a feel of the respondent's opinions on the topic through their responses so as to ensure accuracy. A personal observation was also used during questionnaire survey.

- Beneficiaries: To elicit information about people's understanding of cultural meaning in housing that has been implemented in Mpukunyoni area and their participation in influencing the choice of housing in rural areas, which must reflect the rural people's settlement patterns, identity, history and culture.

#### **1.11.4. Focus group discussions**

These were used to compare two groups from the study area. They comprised of the pensioners (elders) and the youth (teenagers) and middle age people each of whom will be randomly selected. The pensioner's age group is between 60-80 and the other group is between 17-59. Discussions were held separately to make the teenagers feel free to express themselves among their peers. The reason for using these respondent groups was because the way that the pensioners and the teenagers felt about the current housing design that has been implemented in the study area, differ as a result of the modern influence.

#### **1.11.5. Research Strategy**

The research strategy adopted for this study was a qualitative approach. Mark (1996) defines the qualitative approach as a way to study a phenomenon using general description to describe or explain.

Such approaches were said to be more focussed on narrative description of persons, events and relationships.

#### **1.11.6. Data analysis**

The last phase of the research methodology was to analyse data collected in a qualitative form accordingly. Thereafter, conclusions and recommendations were drawn on the basis of the collected data. These findings then gave possible lessons for the future when one designs for rural communities.

#### **1.11.7. Conclusion**

The research that was adopted was socio-anthropological, which means that the researcher spent some time in the community to determine the respondent's needs.

## **1.12. Chapter Outline**

### **Chapter 1**

The chapter gives background information on the study in question and defines key concepts of rural tribal areas. It also reflects a synopsis of how the study was conducted.

### **Chapter 2**

The theoretical framework forms the backbone of the study. The study reviews what exists on the secondary sources of information regarding the importance and use of indigenous architecture in rural areas, which features variables such as culture, local tradition, language, and construction materials used. These variables play a very important role in shaping the lives of beneficiaries. The chapter provides an insight to the rural situation in tribal areas, with special focus on rural housing design issues as symbols of local identity.

### **Chapter 3**

Discusses the key issues on traditional architecture or vernacular dwelling in rural areas in terms of settlement patterns, groupings of houses, housing typologies and materials used for construction.

### **Chapter 4**

Discussion concerning international case studies and their best practices to assess factors that influence the way rural people shape their lives.

### **Chapter 5**

Discusses relevant factors to be taken into consideration when addressing unique requirements of rural areas. Rural Housing Policy is also critically discussed.

## **Chapter 6**

Discusses rural-urban linkages and impact of housing which result to the provision of houses that do not suits rural setting.

## **Chapter 7**

- Provides a contextual analysis, which includes the historical, physical and socio-economic background of the Mpukunyoni area and then provides an overview of the locality and background of the study area.
- Discusses socio-anthropological research methodology employed in collecting and analysing the data that has been used in this study. The chapter intends to elicit information about the importance of using appropriate rural housing design that reflects rural people's settlement patterns, tradition and culture. Thereafter, it presents an outcome of the research where conclusion and recommendations have been drawn.

## **Chapter 8**

Provides conclusions and some recommendations in relation to the study as a whole. Essentially, it draws together the main arguments and conclusions of the dissertation as a whole.

## **CHAPTER 2**

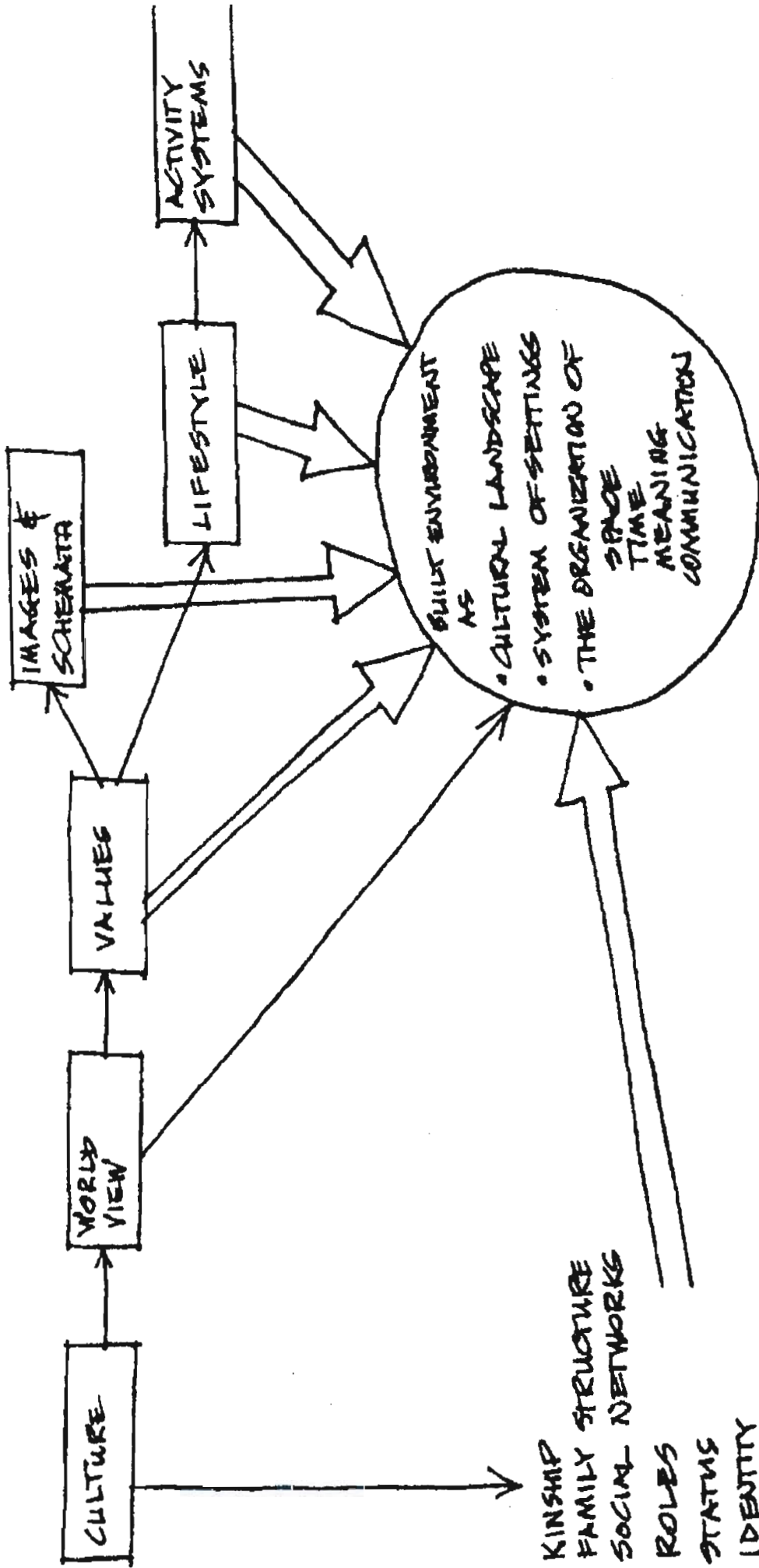
### **2. Theoretical and Conceptual framework**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The theoretical and conceptual framework clarifies the importance in the use of the indigenous housing responses in rural areas, which features variables such as culture, local tradition, language and construction materials used with special reference to Mpukunyoni area, which is in the Northern part of Durban.

The argument put forward focuses on the importance of the physical structure of rural housing design. It is through this design that one is able to look at the way rural people construct meanings into their housing that transcend the physical boundaries of their shelter by defining their history and cultural values.

Culture is a key component that plays a role in people's lives. It influences family structure and social networks of rural dwellers and gives them sense of local identity. The way communities behave and live and decisions they take depends on the culture prevalent in that particular community. The role and status of tribal authorities symbolise and give meaning to culture preservation that must be kept alive at all times. Therefore, the cultural model of built environment is strongly based on widely shared cultural norms. The way these traditional housing are designed automatically suit the time, space and needs. Rapoport (1993) discusses the importance of culture through the diagram (figure 1) next page.



NOTE: WIDTH OF ARROWS SHOWS HOW EASY IT IS TO RELATE THE GIVEN VARIABLE(S) TO BUILT ENVIRONMENTS -- IN THIS CASE HOUSING.

Figure 1: Model of culture (Rapoport, 1993)

Figure 1 shows that the form and style of the building are very much influenced by the meaning an individual attaches to a home, meaning which determines identity and future. Rural communities define housing as a reflection of their adult beliefs regarding the universe of nature, society and the self. Therefore, it is very imperative to provide housing that considers culture and background of an individual which can then be passed on to the next generation. Rural places consider housing in an integrated manner with environment and attitudes towards the environment, interaction with the environment and behaviour related to the environment (De Waal, 1999).

In rural areas the availability of space which meets physical, functional, climatic conditions and socio-cultural needs have great benefit of the human inhabitant. Socio-cultural forces and environmental forces are the boundaries that affect both the settlement and its architectural contents. The way people design their housing and the availability of space needed go in line with the use of the holistic building, which is traditional housing. Traditional housing especially for the Zulus has always been rooted in the culture, kinship, climate and needs of the community. Their traditional dwellings preserve their ancient history of artefacts and architecture. These houses are also described as a museum representing the family and its preceding generations. Michell and Bevan (1992) discuss the importance of culture that:

*“Perhaps we are naïve to assume that traditional buildings reflect a society in harmony with its environment. But after all, such buildings represent the accumulation of centuries of assimilated wisdom in the techniques of transforming local materials into shelter for the community...”*

This does not mean that traditional housing has all answers, or that modern material methods cannot provide solutions. Essentially, the

approach of traditional building is more holistic and inclusive. Contemporary housing design and construction is a much rapid, complicated and often more disjointed affair... which therefore does not answer the needs of people (ibid). Perhaps making use of self-help housing where there is transfer of skills and use of available natural material which often leads to more satisfactory results must be considered since it is more holistic (De Waal, 1999).

## **2.2. Theoretical Perspectives**

Theories are explanations that enable people to understand why certain processes happen in a particular manner. Theories will be used to give an explanation that will enable people to understand an ongoing debate on the roles of traditional leaders in national and local government in the new South Africa. This therefore, questions the future of the institution of traditional leaders, which is closest to the rural people.

The theories that will be used to show conflicting ideas that seem to arise when dealing with rural housing projects will be discussed below.

### **2.2.1. Modernist Theory**

The Modernist Theory calls for a major transformation in the institution of traditional leaders and rural housing design so as to meet the requirements of a modern, non-sexist and non-racial democracy. Such changes expect to bridge a gap between rural and urban areas. These changes have led to the adoption of urban housing approach in rural areas, which undermines people's culture and identity. Under modernist theory there are three perspectives namely: feminists, liberals and civics (Walker, 1994).

The Feminist Theory is primarily concerned with gender inequality in rural areas. This theory argues that the institution of traditional

leaders promotes gender inequalities, especially in rural areas since the institution is based on patriarchal norms and values. Therefore, the situation in rural areas demands attention with regards to housing, land tenure and women. Housing has immediate consequences for women because of their greater domestic responsibilities which include cooking, collecting water and firewood. Aliyar and Shetty in Dandekaar (1993) argue that beside the hard work that women engage themselves in including agricultural production; women need to have a greater voice in the creation of their homes. As a result women are rarely considered during formulation of policy or during implementation of local projects and yet they are directly and often adversely affected by inappropriate shelter (Dandekar, 1993). The discussion shows the importance of involving women gradually in the designing and building of their homes.

Walker (1994) tries to solve the problem of redressing past imbalances when he argues that the key institutions in rural societies need to be radically transformed, especially local government. In addition, the legitimating discourses of 'tradition', 'custom' and 'African culture' should also be transformed to meet contemporary goals of a non-racial and non-sexist society. In order to address these disadvantages Walker (1994) argues that key institutions such as traditional authorities, customary law, polygamy, and the male-dominated homestead must be taken into consideration. Therefore there is a need for refashioning of custom to fit the contemporary goals of a modern society.

Bekker (1994:200) argues under Liberal Theory that the traditional leaders' institution is against the precepts of a democratic society. Basically, the liberals argue that it is male centredness, hereditary title, its racial and tribal nature present problems to achieving democracy. These problems make it impossible to get rid of the incompetent ones. Radcliffe-Brown and Forde(1994) argue that the

authority of the traditional authority allows him considerable power to influence opinion so as to achieve particular goals. The argument put forward, shows the traditional authorities as people that hold all powers to influence the housing design for their communities. The Liberal Theory therefore sees the need for the communities to be fully involved in the development since it involves them. This theory gives community power to influence the rural housing design suitable for their areas.

Civic Theory sees no need for traditional leaders in local government because of being an institution that has no place in the local government and in the society and therefore, sees a need for them to be abolished (Walker, 1994). Since, local government is responsible for bringing about development in rural areas; therefore they should be given full control without any interference from the traditional leader's side.

### **2.2.2. Traditionalist Theory**

The Traditionalist Theory sees a need to preserve culture at all cost so that even the design used has to reflect the identity of rural people. Therefore, this theory sees no need for the planners to look abroad for solutions when designing housing for rural people because that can result in traditional values of village life being lost.

According to the Traditionalist Theory, it is essential to discuss the importance of culture as it plays a significant role in people's lives by influencing the way they think, behave and the decisions that people take depend on the culture prevalent in the particular community. According to this theory, it is the traditional authorities' responsibility to choose how to develop, plan, design, build and maintain the built environment mostly because such factors must reveal cultural aspects in them. Therefore, the appearance of the built form in rural areas must respond to the present needs without compromising the ability

of the future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland Report, WCED.1987).

The Traditional Theory also believes that the institution of traditional leaders is at the heart of rural governance, political stability and successful policy implementation. Tribal authorities are essentially political, social, and economic structures and they symbolise and maintain socio-political order, which is necessary for rural development. Traditional leaders act as a symbol of unity, maintain peace, preserve customs and culture, allocate land to subjects, resolve disputes and faction fights, promote the identity of communities and pulmugate tribal regulations (Keulder,1998). All this aspects should be reflected in the traditional dwellings so as to keep the culture alive for the next generation to come.

The study shows different arguments between the Modernist Theory and the Traditional Theory on how rural development should be carried out. It advocates that the people concerned are involved in their development. The Modernist Theory sees integrated development as the only tool of overcoming the past imbalances by adopting urban type design in rural areas and promoting gender equality. This theory also sees the need to restructuring the role played by the traditional authorities since it is bias and men-dominated. Therefore, the rural housing policy needs to be revisited to ensure that all rural communities are accommodated during decision-making and satisfied with their living conditions. The Traditionalist Theory on the other hand sees the role played by the traditional authorities as a crucial one and that needs to be passed on from one generation to the other. This shows the importance of culture preservation in the built environment since it symbolises one's sense of identity.

### **2.3. Social Capital theory**

Social capital speaks of the interactions or connections and networks among individuals or people which permit them to build communities (Coleman, 1998). In rural communities, such connections include trust, norms, values, moral codes which provide a sense of identity for its members. This also signifies rural people getting together consistently and effectively to discuss social, economic and cultural issues that influence concepts of housing design so as to pursue shared objectives. Putman (2000) assert that when people lack connection to others, they are unable to test the reality of their own views, whether in the give or take of casual conversation or in more formal deliberation.

One of the characteristics of rural area is the spirit of togetherness among people which create a good communication and solve problems that rural people might experience. They both view social capital as having elements of trust within and between associations, and social norms that emphasise values such as honesty, reliability, reciprocity, and equality. Therefore, the home acts as a foundation to nurture rural communities as it is a place in which one tries to fulfil the fundamental purpose of human society namely: a secure, rewarding, happy or at least liveable life” (Pama, Angel & de Goede, 1977).

Pama et al (1977) discusses the importance of housing and regards the family as the fundamental unit of a society. A house or a home view represents an extended womb of the children during their formative years. This means protecting the physical, psychological, educational and emotional development of children. These are very crucial to both the individual and the community (Pama et al, 1977).

Utilizing and constructing social capital might provide people and communities with the bond they require to identify the new realities of decentralization. Decent and affordable housing forms the core of this

connectedness; a secure home gives people roots and stabilizes communities (Rohe and Stewart, 1996). Because housing is a major foundation for building social capital, the role of government housing policy is even more critical as power and spending devolve to communities (Rosenbaum, 1991). If cities and towns assume a larger role in managing social spending because they supposedly are better connected to the needs of their citizens, then it is vital that their citizens actually feel connected to them (Rosenbaum, 1991).

Suzman (2000) asserts that groups that succeed in building social capital are able to nurture collaborative social activity. It must also be recognised that to create a good community that has strong social capital; the idea of trust must reside within members of the family. In other words, interaction allows people to build communities, to commit themselves to each others, and to knit the social fabric (Putnam, 2000). A sense of belonging and the concrete experience of social networks and the relationships of trust and tolerance that can be involved bring great benefits to rural people. In this case designers should provide housing that shows cultural and historical influence for the existing generation and the generation to come and not housing with urban influence which threatens to undermine the social and cultural integrity of rural residents.

Temkin and Rohe (1998) advanced Putnam's theory of social capital. They both view social capital as consisting of two major tools, socio-cultural milieu and institutional infrastructure. Socio-cultural milieu includes the state in which the residents feel that their neighbourhood is a distinct place, interacting with one another in a form of lending items, paying visits to each other, engaging in the discussion of local dilemmas. The institutional capital on the other side of the spectrum is parallel to the bonding capital, whereby it measures the presence and quality of neighbourhood organisations (Temkin and Rohe, 1998). These components make it easier for rural dwellers to agree upon the

housing design that is suitable for them, mostly because of being united and understand their socio-economic and cultural status.

Through the above-mentioned theorists, it is then clear that the study includes not only physical parameters for housing delivery, but emotional effects, mental effects and even cultural/ spiritual effects of housing (Arias, 1993). In defining this further, theorists consider that housing has an effect on the emotions of people, based on their past experience of housing. Furthermore, people have an ideal concept of the housing they believe they want to live in and the house they live in affects how they relate to life and society. Housing is also viewed in terms of cultural perception of people and environmental influences.

## **2.4. CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES**

Rowlands (1993) defines approach as a set of values, beliefs and attitudes that provide a rough guiding framework within which specific methods and techniques can be used. Top-down approach is regarded as disempowering, male biased, formulaic and exclusionary and bottom-up approaches as empowering, participatory, gender-equitable, people-centred and inclusionary. Communities need to get assistance to develop holistically, taking into account the physical, human, social, political and economic development of the whole community.

### **2.4.1. Development approach**

Rural development has been a main focus in the developing countries. 70% to 80% of the population of developing countries reside in rural areas (Jeppe, 1985). This has led to increased agricultural produce to feed the fast growing population. According to Jeppe (1985) rural development is approached as a series of integrated measures improving and promoting the economic (agricultural), productive capacity and rural life. This can then prevent urbanisation from rural to urban areas.

Biddle and Biddle(1965:78-9) define community development as a social process by which human beings can become more competent to live with and gain some control over local aspects of a frustrating and changing world. It involves co-operative study, group decisions, collective action, and joint evaluation that lead to continuing of all helping professions and agencies that can assist in problem- solving. The personal betterment is brought about in the midst of social action that serves as growing awareness of community need. The main aim of this approach is to improve social, economic and cultural conditions of communities by means of programmes designed to achieve a wide variety of specific improvements. The principle of community participation is simply expressed in the saying "*do not give a hungry person a fish but teach him how to catch fish to lastingly prevent his hunger*" (Biddle and Biddle, 1965). Rural communities need to make an improvement themselves. The individual and the community as a whole thereby cultivate the attitude of "*do it yourself*" and does not look to the government for assistance and '*handouts*' in all matters. The attitude of own initiative and self-reliance in the personal and community life promotes the belief in the dignity. People need to gain enough faith in themselves to make continuous efforts in the interest of themselves and their communities. One may think that this is the only choice that rural dwellers are left with to mitigate the use of urban design in rural areas. This development encourages people to be initiators, which then give them full control when deciding the housing typology they want because they understand their local aspects more than the developers.

Rodwin(1987) sees the need to facilitate development by providing directly for human needs, while generating employment. Most projects tend to focus on the economic angle rather than quality of environment while preserving culture. Such issues state clearly that the built form must respond to the complexities and diversities of

context in both urban and rural areas so as to embrace broader developmental concerns.

Ferrinho(1980:51) uses the concept 'human solidarity' meaning a shared feeling or spirit of unity, a common responsibility for the present and the future life of the community and promotive interdependence making each individual responsible for his own achievements and achievements of others. Ferrinho (1980:54) continues to say that *'the self-respect of a human being implies appreciation of himself and his fellow-men as the principal means for their own development'* (Ferrinho, 1980). Therefore, the government assist people in their own betterment so as to inspire confidence by the people in their own ability to do better.

#### **2.4.2. Developer- driven Approach**

Rowlands (1993) defines top-down approach as an approach that is regarded as disempowering, male biased, and exclusionary. This approach gives developers powers to take decisions on behalf of the communities without consulting them first. This act put people last instead of putting them first.

Top-down approach seem to be a problem faced by rural communities because they find themselves marginalized in decision- making which then results to provision of housing that does not meet their requirements as rural residents.

The housing policy points out that all the needs of communities should be recognized including rural communities. It is essential that local planning authorities plan to meet housing requirements in rural areas, based on regular assessment of local needs. Cultural heritage is increasingly viewed as an important asset for local identity. Rural villages are considered historically and architecturally valuable and make an important contribution to local countryside character.

Human development is a process by which an individual develops self-respect, and becomes self-reliant, cooperative and tolerant of others through becoming aware of people's shortcomings as well as their potential for positive change. Therefore, developers have the responsibility to enable communities to acquire as many skills as possible through training so that the community members can be in a position of doing things on their own with little or no help from the outside.

### **2.4.3. Integrated/Enabling Approach**

This is the approach whereby government moves away from the state of building a complete house for its people to a state whereby it provides basic infrastructure or sometimes builds a core house and expects the future residents to add the remaining components (UNCHS-Habitat, 1995). The beneficiaries are then expected to add the remaining housing components. In reality a core house serves as a starting point and most of the work towards achieving housing begins after this stage (Adebayo, 2000).

The study looks at different approaches to discuss relations between culture and built form in rural areas as well as the importance of housing construction. Housing construction creates meaning for rural communities and enables them to better understand their own context. Enabling Approach seems to come with solutions to problems that rural communities face because its principles states the importance of putting people first, especially when packaging housing projects.

The enabling approach to housing incorporates the role of the poor in their own housing provision into state programmes thereby reducing the government's share of the housing burden (Rodell and Skinner, 1983). The enabling approach seems to be a successful approach for South Africa as it encourages beneficiaries to improve their houses

themselves. According to Turner, housing is a social necessity, when left to the people themselves they will build dwellings of types and qualities corresponding to their economic capacity and social circumstances (Marcussen, 1990). People may provide housing for themselves and the state can interfere in the form of infrastructure such as water, electricity and sewerage provision. The housing typology that people normally use for building is the one that understands economic, social, and cultural and development issues of their place.

For any housing implementation to be successful in serving beneficiaries needs, it should be based on the principle that allows people to drive their development. The developers tend to make a mistake of presenting the ready made structure based on the notion of what needs to be done for the people. This is against one of the components that put some emphasis on the approach that development should be viewed as a holistic term. Therefore, there seems to be conflict between theory and practice when developers are building houses for the rural poor. This is caused by the critical issue surrounding designs which have been modelled on the experience of the urban design (Andersen,1977). The problem starts when the developers assume historically that norms and systems arising from a particular set of experiences suitable for urban areas can be readily adopted by rural areas. This is not what the rural dwellers need but what the developers think the people need.

There seems to be a gap between the planning process carried out by the developers and the beneficiaries' perceptions of their own needs. Therefore, a new holistic approach that encompasses various factors should be in use when designing for rural people. Such factors take into consideration people's physical, economic and cultural needs, which influence built environment. Rural housing is different from the

urban one and the housing policy should mention that. Housing design plays a crucial role in identifying one's sense of belonging.

According to Burkey (1993), it is becoming more and more apparent that the first step in achieving genuine participation is a process in which the rural people themselves become more aware of their situation, the socio-economic reality around their own problems, the causes of the problems and measures they themselves can take to begin changing their situation. Rural communities need to have a say on the design that they want to see on the ground. Therefore, the kind of development that is needed in rural communities is the one that would enhance the quality of people's lives and bridge a gap between the planning processes carried out by the developers and the beneficiary's perceptions of their needs.

Anthropologists have presented culture as the sum of customs, usages, traditions, myths, and rituals to be found in discrete people, tribe class, or nation. The main reason why anthropologists bother explaining culture is because of the transformations that have occurred, which shift culture aside (Burkey.1993).

This approach includes people in the planning and implementation of the housing projects, which are usually initiated by the government. It is concerned with using housing projects where the community engages in the economic development of programs and projects rather than the technical and managerial aspects of organisations and participation in them. The main focus of this approach is the belief that ordinary people are capable of critical reflection and that their knowledge is relevant and necessary. This approach acknowledges people and sees them having potential to have input on housing design matters.

Zungu (1997) sees a bottom-up (integrated) approach as a requirement so as to create a clear understanding of local conditions and beneficiaries' needs, based on close consultation with the rural community. One of the recurring mistakes of top-down reconstruction programmes is the simplification of housing to a quantified object by ignoring the dynamics of human settlement with its various dimensions. Bottom-up approach to reconstruction solicits and facilitates the process rather than imposing and directing development. It necessitates building appropriate bridges between the community and planners or builders in order to gain insights into local circumstances and processes. It is vital to understand the beneficiaries' socio-economic conditions, the ways they have organised their world, their thoughts about their built environment, their experiences in housing provision, and their perceptions regarding future reconstruction and design of their houses. As Peattie (1983:231) explains that:

*To understand the processes of housing and the invisible structures which shape those processes we need stories which correctly represent the World out there into which housing programmes intervene. We need, in other words, correct stories about process, about conditions, and about the working rules of the housing rules of the housing system or real estate market (Peattie, 1993:231).*

The chapter as a whole looks at different development systems that need to be utilised so as to bring about socio-economic sustainability in rural communities. The approaches note the speedy housing delivery when the beneficiaries are physically involved and contributing to the building of their houses which obviously create employment opportunities.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Traditional Architecture of rural housing**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

The study sees the importance of looking at the indigenous traditional architecture to emphasize the uniqueness of the rural areas compared to urban areas. This then shows that housing development adopted in rural tribal areas solidly cannot be the one used in urban areas. Therefore, the provision of top structures should be in the best interest of the beneficiaries.

There are seven main considerations influencing housing design in rural areas. That is:

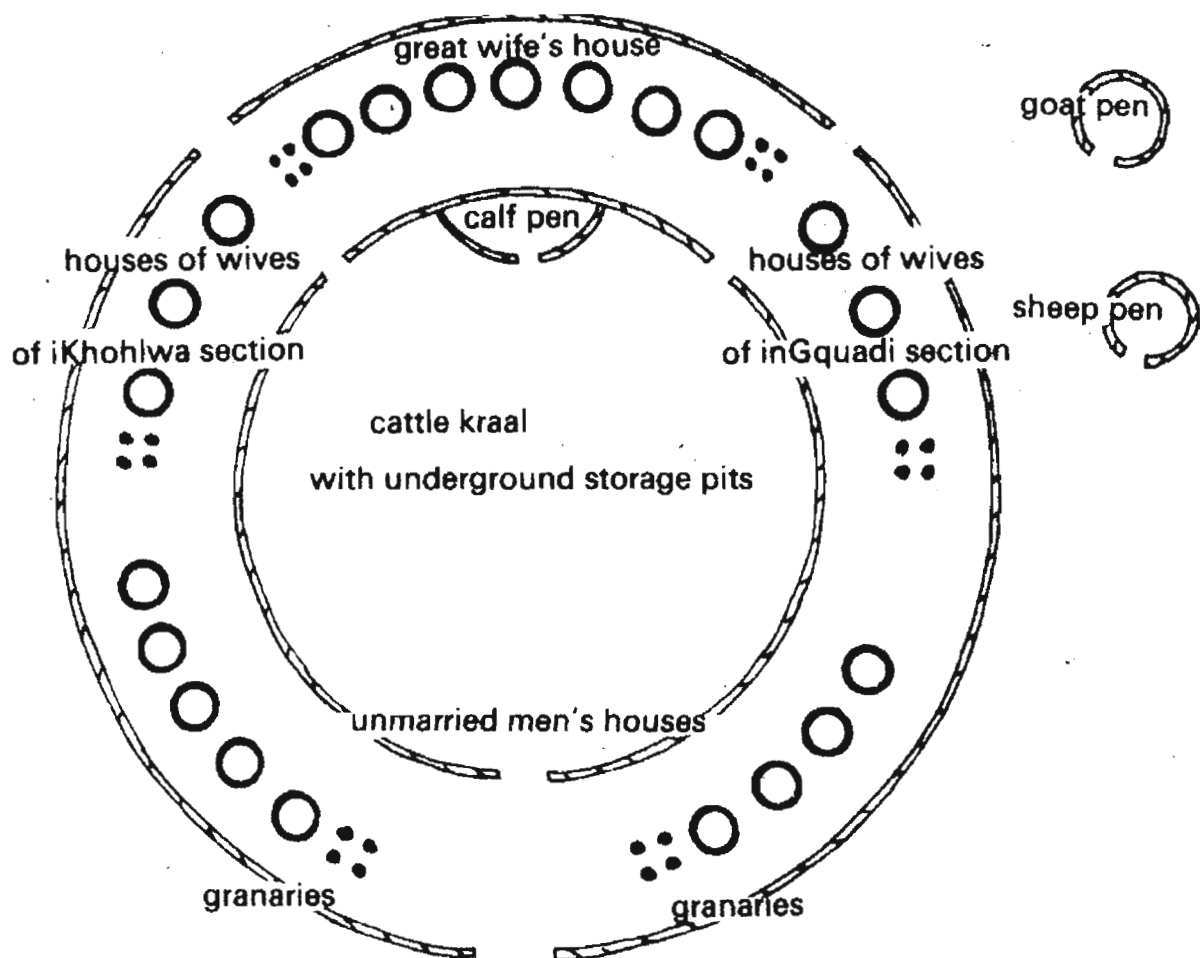
- People and their needs
- Socio-cultural values
- Socio-economic aspects
- Climatic conditions
- Services and health
- Building material used for construction, its durability, structures and maintenance
- Spatial organisation.

According to Frescura (1984:75) rural architecture is generally architecture of societies dominated by traditional values and culture. Architecture is highly responsive to changing economic, technological and social circumstances. But cultural roots are still maintained in rural tribal areas. Therefore, it would be undesirable for one to introduce housing development that ignores community values.

Traditional architecture is understood by the early tradition in human civilisation where indigenous people utilise the resources provided by nature on a sustainable basis. These people bear testament to the fact that humans are dependent on the earth's life support system and traditional cultures (Hill et al as cited in Yan Den Post, 1994).

Vernacular architecture acknowledges the importance of indigenous knowledge concerning the built environment since it has many advantages. It has little or no cost and is easily accessible. The indigenous knowledge systems and technologies are found to be socially desirable, economically affordable, sustainable and involve minimum risk to rural communities. Above all, they are widely believed to conserve resources. Beliefs also play a fundamental role in people's livelihood and in maintaining their built-environment socially, economically and culturally.

Since from the late eighteenth century, Zulu's settlement patterns have been round in shape. They consisted of the cattle kraal in the centre and houses were built in that form too. However, each group is separated from the other within a household unlike in urban areas where you find all family members living in the same house with different rooms divided by walls. Figure 2 next page shows the household that still practice polygamy. The first wife's house is in the middle with the second wife's house on the left hand side and the third one on the right. The men's houses are normally next to the main entrance followed by the wives and children. Since men are heading their families, so they strongly feel the need to protect their families against outsiders or enemies.



**Figure 2: Plan of Zulu Village**  
**(Denyer, 1978)**

The rough aesthetics of vernacular architecture have long since held a fascination for modern man (Frescura, 1984). The developers and designers of today have in the search for rural roots borrowed some of the vernacular elements of earlier times and applied them to people's contemporary dwellings. This is a record primarily of the house forms and building methods of African people and the richness and variety achieved from regions, cultures and indeed from person to person (Frescura, 1984).

It is crucial to understand the relationship between residents in rural areas and the place that they occupy. This has raised concerns for Norberg Schulz (cited in Frescura, 1984) when trying to find the

psychological 'roots' of architecture (Frescura, 1984). Settlement patterns, house form and materials can be read as signs of rural people's relationship with their environment. These signs can be used to come to an understanding of 'place' that appears to have ideas of identity and orientation to people's relationship with the environment. Therefore, identity is the key to experiencing one's environment as meaningful, while orientation deals without understanding of one's surroundings. Traditional vernacular architecture then makes a fundamental contribution in showing one's sense of belonging (Frescura, 1984).

One of the truisms of architecture is that the design of any particular building will be subject to any number of variable factors such as location and socio-cultural character of environment of which may radically influence the final aesthetic of the design (Frescura, 1984). The final house form may ultimately be influenced by any one of the variables associated with culture influences, local tradition and language, availability of materials, materialism, modern influences, aspirations, finance, social groupings, building methods, site and aspect. The distinctive character of vernacular architecture can be said to be derived directly from its use of the found and 'natural' material. Vernacular uses its immediate environment as a ready quarry for the materials necessary for construction: the grass, the sticks, the stones and soil (Frescura, 1984). Therefore, the way a house is built and designed is influenced by the availability of building materials, and influences from the past, present and future.

The Zulu village is well known for its family set up of huts. The early housing design that was once common among the Zulus culture was the **beehives** still following the Zulu village settlement pattern that is oval. These houses are built using traditional materials such as common thatch grass, black wattle (saplings for the hut walls), Natal fig bark for tying material, and rock alder for the central pole support.

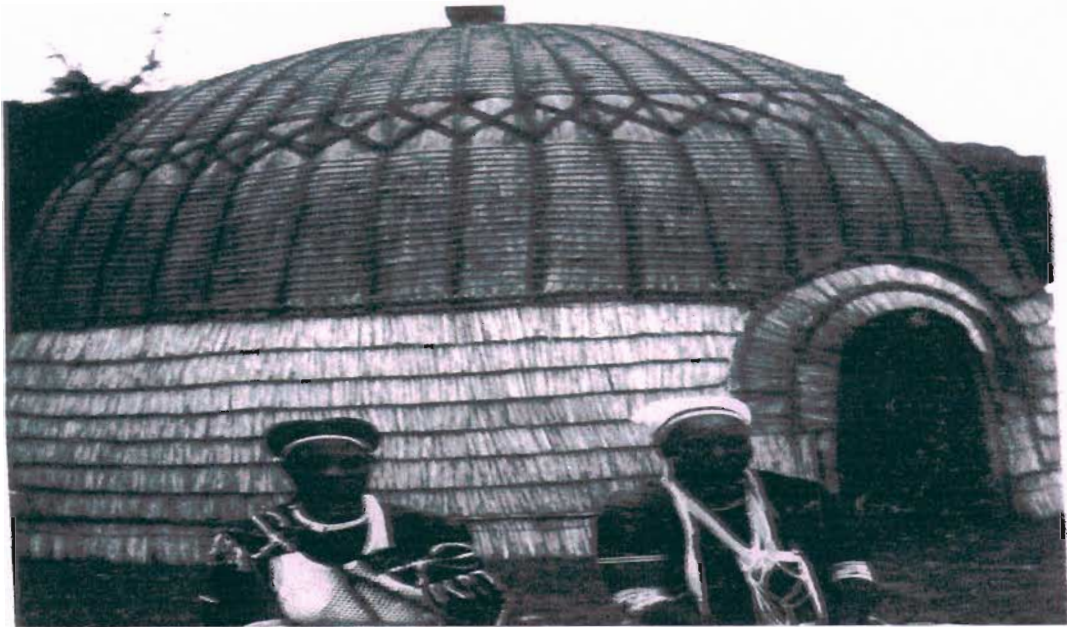
The floor is made of concrete, using cow dung as a traditional polish. Plate 1 below shows women building a beehive hut frame using soaked bark of the Natal fig (Veld and Flora, 1997). This is interesting to find women using their building skills that they have learnt from their mothers to build their houses.



**Plate 1: Beehive under construction**

**(By: Baden-Powell in Scouting for Boys)**

Plate 2 below shows a physical structure of a beehive hut that is eye-appealing.



**Plate 2: Complete Beehive style of the Zulus**

**(By: Knuffel, 1973)**

There has been some changes that have occurred which has led to Zulu adopting rondavels as a way of improving their houses. Plate 3 below shows women making mud bricks to be used for construction.

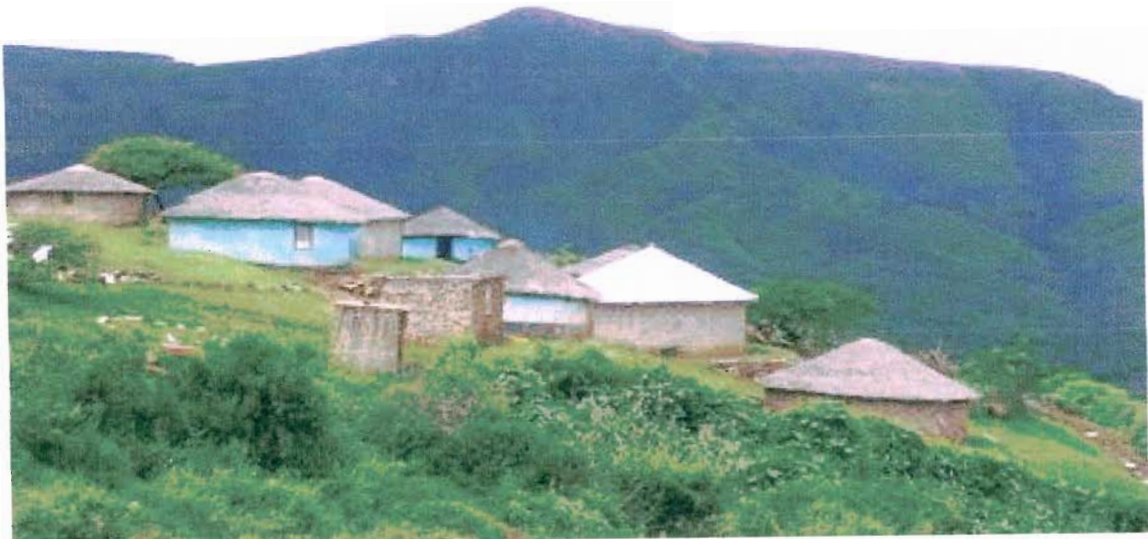


**Plate 3: Mud Bricks used for construction**

Plate 4 below shows traditional houses that only use local material for construction. The family still follow the common shape where the cattle kraal is still found in the middle and houses around it. Plate 5 on the other hand shows traditional houses using both local and modern material to make houses more durable. For example, the picture shows one of the houses that has been built using corrugated iron and concrete blocks. It is unimaginable to build houses that are completely suitable for urban areas in rural setting. Plate 6 below show the modern house that undermines rural people's settlement pattern which is one of the characteristics of rural places.



**Plate 4: Rondavels built using local material.**



**Plate 5: Rondavels structure for the Zulus**



**Plate 6: A modern structure of the subsidy housing**

Schwerdtfeger (1982) mentions the importance of culture, when arguing that social and cultural anthropologists seem to regard dwellings and other types of construction as primarily of interest because of their symbolic character and significance. Housing design

acts as a code that displays a deep structure which embodies and reflects the symbolism that pervades the culture of those who construct and occupy them.

Change has been introduced so rapidly that essential qualities and traditional architecture has been lost in the technical erection of houses, using modern materials and technology. However, the housing type used by the Zulus in rural areas is round in shape and stands in the forefront of architectural design. This shows the beauty of the Zulu culture lies. As a result, the Zulus traditional way of building houses is still alive even at this day.

The project packaging process in housing is expected to fit in all cultural dynamics, especially if they are to have a significant bearing on the housing project. This therefore enables the designs to incorporate the tradition of the people so that housing could be viewed as an integral part of their lives and not as a development project imposed on them. For instance, it is generally known that rural people still live with extended families in rural areas. It is very imperative to view housing in its totality, so as to achieve maximum socio-economic input in rural areas during packaging processes, the developer needs to cater for cultural aspects in housing to ensure that the potential users of such housing would get maximum benefit.

Historic designs specialise in contributing to other disciplines that are concerned with rural people's relationship to their environment and to their fellow people (Frescura, 1984). The form and materials of their dwelling and their relationship to their surroundings speak volumes about their activities, thus providing the man-made picture frame within which these cultural activities take or took place. Lack of local input regarding the design of houses may result in houses and related facilities that do not meet needs and demands. To avoid this, the

design and location of housing should reflect the needs and demands of beneficiaries.

Turner (1972) has demonstrated that housing is not just a product but it provides a roof over our heads, four walls and a door. It is also a process which is fundamental to the cultural well-being of the society within which and by whom it is constructed. Housing is a process by which a society builds its dwellings and the way they are designed or constructed and the involvement of the society is as significant as the efficiency of the house, as a product providing protection from the elements.

According to Bevan and Mitchell (1992), traditional buildings reflect a society in harmony with its environment. Such buildings represent the accumulation of centuries of assimilated wisdom in the techniques of transforming local materials into shelter for the community. It is in considering the basic requirement for shelter in the community, that the concept of harmony with the environment has been considered appropriate. Rural communities build their shelter using material which is readily available and techniques which they have learnt from previous generations. This does not mean that traditional housing has all answers but what makes it preferable is that it is more holistic, and inclusive as compared to modern housing.

Rural areas are still a centre of attraction to urban dwellers, designers, and developers. The attraction of these areas is often connected to its history and its soil, which then calls for a certain type on housing construction. There are many characteristics of living in rural areas. In tribal areas, people's social structure, traditional practices and their relationship to one another show the uniqueness of the areas themselves. Mpukunyoni is an area that is suitable for agricultural practices. It forms a community that ties together and knows one another because they have common origins and shared experiences.

In rural areas they build in clusters for social reasons. Climatic conditions also determine the form of shelter. The settlement patterns and the way in which people build their houses reflect these influences. The study attempts to look at the relations between culture and built form and the use of cross-cultural approaches (Anderson, 1976). In such approaches, all types of settings are to be considered because of the systems formed. Housing is one of such settings, as it is universal for all humans.

House construction plays a crucial role in creating meaning for rural communities and enables them to better understand their own context. Tribal areas have always been shaped by culture and lifestyle. Therefore, rural architecture is highly responsive to changing economic technological and social circumstances; it is also generally the architecture of societies dominated by traditional values and culture (Frescura, 1984). Moreover, cultural roots are still maintained as it is undesirable for one to introduce housing development that ignores the community values.

The form of the building and the style all add to the process influence the meaning an individual attaches to a home; meaning which determines identity and future. Expectation arises in an individual as a result of past experiences of home. Language is also a medium of cultural interchange that provides patterns for thought and action; architecture structures activity and ways of thinking. In cultures that participate in building as an activity, the ideas manifest in built form has an ongoing influence on daily life (Schwerdtfeger (1982). The idea of architecture as a medium for culture implies an underlying structure for communication. Therefore, the way housing is designed defines your history and then predicts what will resemble the future.

The spatial pattern in rural areas meets the functional needs of the people living and working in rural areas. This includes not just agriculture, and other primary activities, but also a range of economic activities, which are now found in an increasingly diversified rural economy. The changes have been caused by globalisation that has brought modernity. This has subsequently raised a concern whether traditionally held cultural values still have validity on developers when they design houses for rural people.

The settlement patterns, sizes, kinship patterns, amenities and services, socio-political organisation of African rural settlement differ in many aspects. The traditional rural settlement of the Zulus for example is small and geographically dispersed over the countryside. African communities are traditionally semi-autonomous and display kinship settlements which are component units in a hierarchy of tribal subdivisions (Jeppe, 1985). The structured kinship nature and authority structures are based upon hereditary leadership of tribal chiefs, headmen which make traditional African villages well-organised and close-knit socio-political entities. They are also responsible for administering rural communities, through tribal authorities under the Ingonyama Trust Board.

It is of great importance to first understand the continuity, security, self-identity or personal and social status before understanding the housing design used. Rapoport (1969) argues that a home is the expression and symbol of the self. It corresponds with the vision that people have of the ideal life and makes use of symbols, which translates into culture. The material that people use when designing or building a house reflects their conscious and unconscious attempts to express their social identity. The design that people use depends on their cultural awareness and values. A sense of place and home defines the concept of place affiliation and its components: identity, attachment and actualisation.

Traditional houses are constructed of the materials found in the immediate vicinity, using techniques developed over previous generations. Grass-oriented technology seems to have become predominant amongst the Swazi, Zulu, and Xhosa groups whose major areas of settlement lie largely along the rain and grass rich coastal lands east of the Drakensberg. It was a combination of rain and grass which encouraged the house builder on one hand to shy away from easily eroded mud walls, whilst on the other to invent a house form which was entirely dependent upon the application of various types of grass plentiful in the region (Frescura, 1984).

Bevan and Mitchell(1992) highlights a valid point about housing needs, when arguing that changing climate, due to the ice ages, desertification and consequent changes in the availability of plant and animal products, such as timber and hides are issues that have been the main focus. In this case availability of traditional materials is an important challenge and there are other challenges that include urbanization, planning controls and changing expectations. All of these factors contribute to the changing of the housing design and construction methods. These factors give rise to socially-determined housing standards, making each unit more expensive in terms of time, construction and maintenance.

With regards to construction, traditional communities have always used natural material found in their immediate environments for construction, and the resultant buildings have been well integrated in the natural environment. Norberg-Schultz (1984) argues that traditional buildings relate to the existing architectural characteristics that are supported by the choice of materials of construction that respond to the environment. Traditional buildings have the added advantage of being cheap and easily accessible. There has been wide use of such material across Africa. In South Africa, mud or stone walls for construction of houses, grass and wood for roofing is

commonly used. In some areas like Nigeria where there are swampy areas of the delta region, they use timber for piling to suspend the building above water as well as for frames, walling and ceiling is used (Fathy, 1973). Fathy, (1973), Schwelferger(1982) and Guidoni (1976) have proved in their studies that such materials are climatically friendly (Fathy, 1973).

The holistic perspective of home considers choices in a holistic building design used in rural areas. Traditional housing has always been rooted in the culture, climate and needs of community. Mitchell and Bevan (1992) state a crucial point when arguing about traditional housing saying that “Perhaps we are naïve to assume that traditional buildings as a reflection of a society in harmony with its environment. Most importantly, such buildings represent the accumulation of centuries of assimilated wisdom in the techniques of transforming local materials into shelter for the community....” (Mitchell and Bevan, 1992).

Housing projects can be implemented successfully if they are viewed as an ongoing social process, which seeks to:

- a. Create a unique sense of place and belonging
- b. Improve access to resources and economic opportunities
- c. Improve the quality of the environment
- d. Provide social amenities and facilities and promote resource sharing
- e. Offer a range of affordable housing options
- f. Provide for assistance in self-help and upgrading programmes
- g. Provide opportunities for ongoing public participation

Self-help housing is one of the delivery systems considered to solve a very crucial social issue in South Africa. Harms (1992) argue that self help-housing consists of state activities with the population, including

sites and service schemes, upgrading, state-aided and self-build schemes. It is based on the fact that poor people need to be supported to unleash their potential in meeting their needs and wants. In this case, individuals take responsibility of financing and building their own houses as well as improving their living conditions beyond housing. It also acts as a tool responsible for the effective transfer of resources and also bringing education and participation within the reach of the poor. Ward (1982) defines self-help housing as a process where individuals and groups among those to be housed have the responsibility for the planning, organisation and implementation of particular tasks leading to the provision and maintenance of houses and residential infrastructure.

Turner (1976) emphasized the positive aspects of self-help housing as it put its users at the centre of the development. He continues to explain that the users themselves know their needs better than the bureaucrats who produce public housing without the consultation of people's needs and hence self built houses have greater 'use' value and are more affordable. The users can use scarce resources in a much better way than would be possible with standard solutions and the architecture would be more suited to the needs of the users. The act of providing your home yourself on self help basis reaffirms Turner's policy that housing is a process and not a product (Turner, 1976).

According to Turner (1976), good housing is housing that is locally produced through network structures and decentralising technologies which are managed by people themselves. This housing typology is traditional and uses local material for housing construction. The government is therefore expected to protect and make available scarce resources, by improving the service infrastructure that enable and stimulate the provision of local housing. Turner further explains the use value of housing that led to policies advocated the empowerment

of the people involved in housing themselves, autonomy so that people could decide what best suited their needs and levels of affordability. Self-building and relaxing of prescriptive standards reduce housing costs (Turner, 1976).

Self-help housing process needs effective community participation for it to succeed. It requires the commitment and physical resources of individual households working towards a common goal of creating a viable living environment. Community participation results in the 'empowerment' of participants although it is still a questionable issue to determine who is a main initiator of the housing process. Most importantly, to maximise involvement of the community, the end user is therefore considered the primary agent of the housing process. The support paradigm states that the users as housing agents must decide on the appropriate housing design suitable for them and whether support provided can assist them in achieving their goals in providing housing for themselves (Merrifield et al, 1993). In this way, rural people become articulated as a social force that drives the development process thus creating environment that is sensitive and responsive to their needs (Stein, 1998). Furthermore, self-help housing is seen as part of a strategy of social action aimed at changing factors that abolish the causes of poverty. The adoption of urban design in rural areas raises a relevant concern with the role played by the community to clarify as to who the rural housing development is aimed at satisfying, the agency (government subsidies) or community.

Self-help housing uses people with intensive knowledge to show others how to construct the traditional houses. The core enabler of self-reliance is to train people to do things themselves. It becomes one of the responsibilities of the development agency like the government to ensure that local people are enabled to be given hands-on practical experience and training in housing projects. The training on housing

related skills have a belief that community development is primarily about helping people to help themselves. The skills enable people to consolidate houses for themselves and for other people. The houses they build contribute meaningfully to the locality of the place.

The self-help increases the capacity of residents to address the problems and possible solutions so as to improve their lives. People engage in some income generating activities which then brings sustainable development. Rural people have shown some initiatives by forming groups to play stokvels (izitokofela). These stokvels help people build, refurbish, extend and maintain houses of their choice. This also creates job opportunities and makes rural areas sustainable. The fact of involving people in the building of their own houses makes people feel free to build what they like. Perhaps rural areas in South Africa can adopt what the Grameen Bank (GB) in Bangladesh does, bringing about economic development locally.

The GB is aimed at rural people, especially women that are vulnerable to poverty problems as most of them depend on farming (informal sector) and others are unemployed. The GB's main objective is to provide people with loans to help people improve their economic, social and cultural status and also maintain good life. This case study demonstrates a good practice of self- help housing delivery method since housing delivery fulfils various gaps which play a meaningful role in poverty alleviation programmes. Furthermore, self-help housing delivery system helps beneficiaries to express their interest and their future goals about the housing typology they would like to use. Therefore, a house becomes multifunctional structure which serves as an accommodation, income generation, and a symbol of rural dweller's history and lifestyle (<http://www.accessone.com>).

Grameen Bank in Bangladesh specialises in bringing credit to the rural poor and women that are illiterate who pleaded that they did not know how to invest money and earn an income. GB created a

methodology and an institution around the financial needs of the poor by creating access to credit on reasonable terms. The GB enables the poor to build on their existing skills to earn a better income in each cycle of loans. The GB was founded by Professor Muhammad Yunus who is also the Managing Director for this bank (<http://www.grameen.com>).

Yunus, (1998) argued that if financial resources can be made available to the poor people at terms and conditions which are appropriate and reasonable, "*these millions of small people with their millions of small pursuits can add up to create the biggest development wonder*". This conviction of the GB has its root in the traditional bank's structure which has been designed to help the poor who constitutes the largest segment of the society and they are desperately in need of credit. Yunus sees GB as an answer to almost all the problems that the rural poor experiences when he argues that:

*"Digital Divide' can only get worse if no social interventions are made...Digital divide will more and more mean knowledge divide, skill divide and, of course, opportunity divide...Microcredit and IT both have a common capacity-capacity to empower the poor"*  
(<http://www.grameen.com>).

Most distinctive feature of Grameen Bank credit is that it is not based on any collateral or legally enforceable contracts. It is based on mutual trust, strict supervision, accountability, participation and creativity. It is also offered for creating self-employment for income-generating activities and housing for the poor, as opposed to consumption. GB sees credit as an empowering agent, an enabling element in the development of socio-economic conditions of the poor who have been kept outside the banking orbit on the simple ground that they are poor and hence not bankable. GB's positive impact on the formerly poor borrowers has been documented in many independent studies carried out by external agencies including the

World Bank, the International Food Research Policy Institute (IFPRI) and the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) (<http://www.accessone.com>).

Grameen credit gives high priority on building social capital. It is promoted through formation of groups and centres, developing leadership quality through annual election of group and centre leaders, electing board members when the institution is owned by the borrowers. To develop a social agenda owned by the borrowers, it undertakes a process of intensive discussion among the borrowers, and encourages them to take these decisions seriously and implement them. Therefore, special emphasis is then given on the formation of human capital and protecting environment. It also monitors children's education, provides scholarships and student loans for higher education. Furthermore, credit is based on the premise that the poor have skills which remain unutilised or under-utilised. This is definitely not caused by the lack of skills but by the institutions and policies which surround the poor. In order to eliminate poverty, appropriate changes need to be put in place within institutions and policies. The statistics shows that in July, 2004, it has 3.7 million borrowers, 96 percent of whom are women. With 1267 branches, GB provides services in 46,000 villages, covering more than 68 percent of the total villages in Bangladesh (<http://www.grameen.org>).

It is obvious that community participation is an essential component of the self-help housing process but the community must be organised to participate and this organisation must be part of a developmental process wherein the community has control and responsibility over the provision of their housing. The style of houses that is desirable in the tribal areas remains in question. People in tribal areas still have different opinions as to the appropriate form of their houses. But it should be noted what causes confusion is when the beneficiaries want to maintain their traditional form of living, through the housing they built.

In South Africa, self-help housing has been taken as a holistic delivery mechanism of which there has been a number of projects that have been packaged through it and succeeded. Self-help housing combines multiple development services into a coherent delivery system with an aim of improving the well being of rural populations. This also involves quality of life considerations, local capacity building and improving access of the rural poor to basic goods and services. This also specialises and acknowledges people's potential and therefore creates new employment activities and additional community wealth and improvements in local quality of life. The improvements in quality of life recognise the importance of balancing housing needs with economic, social and cultural concerns.

## **Chapter 4**

### **4. International Precedents**

#### **4.1. Vernacular Dwellings**

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the use of traditional housing as a reflection of a particular community or country's uniqueness compared to others. In countries like China and Libya, traditional housing is influenced by social, economic, and cultural factors. The second part focuses on the African countries such as Botswana and Namibia to explore the relationship between the traditional leaders and national with regards to rural housing design used in rural areas.

Awotona and Liu (1999), define China as a large country with a long history and rich cultural traditions. It has a territory of 9.6 million square kilometres and a population of 1.19 billion. It has 56 ethnic groups and an abundant cultural heritage (Awotona and Liu, 1999:223). China is well known for preserving culture as a reflection of her indigenous environment, independent society, specific cultural tradition and traditional vernacular dwellings. However, it also has natural barriers in a form of oceans in the East and South, west desserts to the North, and steep mountains to the West (Awotona and Liu, 1999). Therefore, the Chinese's climatic conditions and topography influence the building and housing structure, together with the material used for construction.

In China, cave dwellings and 'nest' dwellings on trees were two types of primitive houses (Awotona and Liu, 1999). The most common houses in China are cave, stilt and courtyard dwellings. These dwellings all indicate different levels of development and represent three main traditional vernacular dwellings. Figure 3 below shows how houses were passed on from one generation to the other.

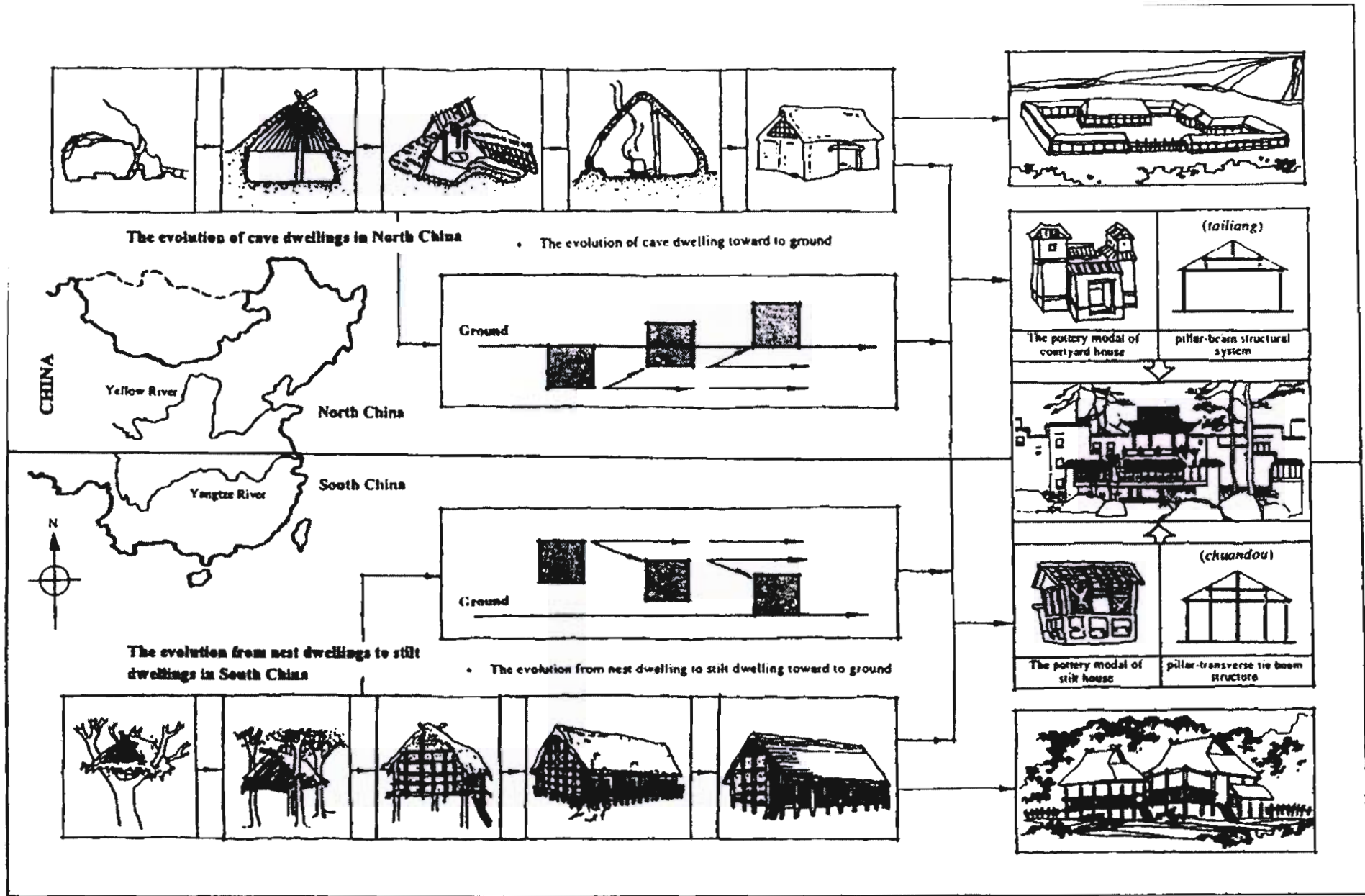


Figure 3: Development of early dwellings in China Awotona and Liu cited in Awotona, (1999)

The Chinese architectural design relies on economic life, customs and increasing population. As an important part in the cultural heritage of Chinese architecture, the traditional vernacular dwellings in various areas are also related to the social, cultural and political aspects of the Chinese people. The way Chinese traditional houses are built is also influenced by physical factors and socio-cultural traditions (Awotona and Liu, 1999).

Gullestad (1993), argues that a house is a clear response to a society's economic, social, aesthetic and psychological needs as a complex object (Gullestad.1993). This complexity in the nature of the dwellings is addressed well by Oliver where he says "Every culture has some form of house.... They are shaped as much by belief systems and concepts of status, territory and security, as by economy, material resources, technology, and climatic conditions" (Oliver, 1987).

The Chinese vernacular houses reflect the life of inhabitants: meeting and expressing the requirements of residents. They also explore the evolution and the transformation of the local dwellings in the process of development. The Chinese people's beliefs and values are reflected in the arrangement of design of their residences in that they regard their ancestral hall as a temple in the house in which ancestral spirit dwelt. The ancestral buildings in the house receive more attention than other buildings in the house. The ancestral hall is designed using better materials, highest roof and biggest size, expressing a focal point of the house (Oliver, 1987).

Ghadames is located in the Libyan Sahara Desert and forms part of the sub-region of Ghadyan, one of the sub-regions of the Tripoli region. It lies 630 km South-West of Tripoli, close to the junction with the borders of Algeria and Tunisia and is situated at an altitude of 350 metres above sea level. It has been inscribed on the world Heritage list of historic monuments by UNESCO since 1987(Awotona and Shawesh

(1999). The geographical location, socio-cultural values and climate play a major role in shaping the rural patterns as well as the house form in the old town of Ghadames. The Ghadamesian traditional house clearly reflects the user's response to the harsh environmental conditions, the need to sustain the social organisation and to respect social and cultural traditions in a sense that the building material used respond to the climate and the use of traditional style shows culture. The building materials available for building are mud, hard lime stone, pumice stone, gypsum, chopped straw and palm trees( trunk, leaf stalks and leaves), It is crucial to examine user perception of both the traditional and 'modern' houses determining the degree of satisfaction with them. In the old town of Ghadames, family is the simplest and most important form of social structure. The influence of the family upon the house can be clearly seen in the house design particularly in the organisation of space. The main consideration is the necessity for privacy, security, and proximity to water. Therefore, the houses are divided into two distinct sections, strictly private and semi-private space. The private space ensures that family life is completely protected from the outside world and no glimpse can be caught from the street, even when the house entrance door is open. The semi-private is a space where male guests are entertained. Clearly, the traditional Ghadamesian house is the outcome of the socio-cultural factors as well as climatic requirements and experiences, all contributing to its design (Awotona and Shawesh, 1999).

In Ghadames, building a house is a cultural phenomenon; its form and organisation are greatly influenced by the socio- cultural environment and way of life (Awotona & Shawesh, 1999: 117). The spatial pattern of the traditional residential area relates directly to the traditional social organisation. When one looks at the traditional Ghadames house, one is surprised and gets a strange feeling about the place, because the homes are well designed and beautifully

constructed. The Ghadamesian people put all their abilities into the building of their homes. They make their homes more comfortable in terms of climate and social needs. All buildings are constructed entirely from local building materials such as sun-dried clay brick, hard limestone and mud mixed with straw. The houses in this complex are of the same basic design, only slightly different in size and decoration. Despite the differences in some of these elements, the uniformity of the houses is apparent (Awotona & Shawesh, 1999).

This study shows Libyan household's positive attitudes towards traditional forms of settlements, neighbourhood and dwellings in contrast to the contemporary 'western' housing layout and design that fail to adapt to the social life needs of the Libyan communities. Therefore, it is very important to focus primarily on housing provision for the majority of the people in such a way that responds to their social, cultural and economic circumstances. House design provides a clear illustration of the way in which the original architects responded to the climate and user's living requirements in the settlement, neighbourhood and house in particular. It is then clear that housing does not only reflect social and cultural change but also leads to it. Housing which is inappropriate, and hence inhibiting, may lead to undesirable changes in family structure, behaviour and other aspects of culture (Awotona & Shawesh, 1999).

Both China and Ghadames address various factors such as economic, cultural, climatic conditions that influence the building type design used. Such factors vary from country to country. This should encourage South Africa to come up with some transformations so as to develop and improve the construction methods on the local dwellings through the utilisation of the easily accessible building material resources in a sustainable manner and make them more durable. Rural communities also need to be well-serviced with basic amenities to create an aesthetic environment.

## **4.2. Traditional leaders versus local government**

Traditional leadership is an institution that has developed over many hundreds of years in both Africa and the rest of the world. It is rooted in the soil of Africa as well as the hearts and minds of all ordinary Africans who still take pride in their history, culture, origin and identity. Land is also the basis of wealth all over the world, since all development originates from it. Such aspects are taken into cognisance through the provision of a housing typology that suits a rural setting.

Today, the new South Africa is faced with the challenge of building one nation by integrating modern and traditional elements. The best example is the use of urban type designs for rural dwellers. The task for accommodating traditional leaders in a democratic society goes hand in hand with reconstruction of local government, as traditional leadership is a recognised form of governance in Southern Africa. Many African countries like Botswana, and Namibia, have managed to retain and maintain the institution of traditional leadership in the government system.

Botswana is located at the centre of the South African plateau, and is bordered by South Africa on the south and southeast, Zimbabwe on the northeast and Namibia on the west and northwest. Approximately 23% of the population is in urban areas and 77% in rural areas (Bouillon, 2000). It is known for having a rich tribal culture, and therefore its legal system consists of local tribal courts, which adjudicate traditional matters and Tribal Land Boards focusing on tribal land issues in rural areas.

In Botswana, the role of traditional leaders in rural local government has been widely overlooked. Yet because their authority originates in pre-colonial times, they often retain legitimacy in the eyes of their people. Failure to recognize their importance results in lost

opportunities for local government. The local government as development agents has seen a need to incorporate tribal leaders in development so as to create a democratic practice. But is this relationship effective? This is a complex question. In many African countries, the practicality aspect of this shows local government having more power over the traditional leaders. In Botswana, the principles of democracy have been reconciled with the heritage of traditional leaders. The state limits their powers, but they play key local administrative roles. Botswana indicates clearly how the system of delegating to chiefs can be practiced. Keulder (1998) argues that in Botswana the House of Chiefs and their advice is often ignored even when the issues may affect the leaders and their communities. This is seconded by the urban type designs that have been used in the tribal areas with so many unresolved complications associated with it (Keulder, 1998).

Bouillon (2000) argues that the government of Botswana has adopted a system of development planning which has coped relatively well compared with other African countries. The development planning involves the preparation of land use plans for both urban and rural areas. The developers are very effective in a sense that they involve community and give them an opportunity to choose preferable housing design options from a range of options determined through the evaluation of physical and economic factors to create a liveable environment.

The incorporation of the traditional leaders into State structures in Botswana is seen as an achievement. The poor working relationship create problems within rural setting. It is noted that these complications that arise between two authority structures affect almost all the provinces (Ntombela, 2000).

The limited functioning of the tribal authorities can further be attributed to certain other factors apart from ignorance. Keulder (1998), points out the argument that “Functionally, their effectiveness has been restricted, not only by their limited powers, but also by the low education and literacy levels of their members” (Keulder, 1998:301). From the quote, stumbling blocks on communication can be identified in a sense that one official language (which is now English) is set as the medium of communication. Therefore, issues of illiteracy among traditional people are an obstacle. The critical factor to such situation could be in contrast to urban areas, education has not been regarded as the main priority (Ntombela, 2000). Maybe this is one of the reasons that gives the developers power to impose housing projects for rural dwellers.

Namibia's economy is heavily dependent on natural resources. Two-thirds of the population live in rural areas and are directly dependent upon the soil and living natural resources for their livelihoods (Brown, 1996). By far the highest proportion of the workforce is involved in subsistence agriculture (dryland cropping and/or livestock farming). Unemployment is estimated at around 20% with a further 40% estimated to be under-employed. Population growth is estimated at 3, 2% a year (UNDP, 1996).

In Namibia the issue of traditional leaders and their role in the governance of Namibia became part of the public debate with the introduction of Traditional Authorities Bill early in 1995 (Keulder, 1998). The public debate raised concerns for the members of the ruling party when they made it clear that they were not willing to forgive traditional leaders of their colonial past and would therefore do their best to keep them out of the political configuration of modern Namibia. Their views were seen as outdated with no place in a modern state and its politics (Keulder, 1998). It is for this reason that the Namibian Constitution states that traditional leaders must pay

allegiance to and accept the authority of the modern state. It does however, provide for a Council of Traditional Leaders whose responsibility is to advise the president on the control and utilization of communal land.

The Constitution clearly states that Traditional Leaders should give support to the policies of the central government, regional, and local authority councils in the performance of their duties and functions. Where their powers conflict with the powers of either central government, regional, or local authority councils then the powers of the central government should prevail (DPLG, 2000).

Buildings have influenced the choice of sites. For example, proximity to a forest where a clearing has been cut, thus providing suitable material for structures. Other factors influencing this choice include proximity to lakes or rivers, where reed for thatching could be found and where access to fishing and farming is easy.

Traditional houses in both Botswana and Namibia are built of natural materials like wood, clay or mud. These traditional houses are held by the tying of fibres. Perhaps rural people need to acquire more knowledge so as to make the natural material, which is easily accessible durable.

The study shows desperate need of shelter in African countries especially in rural areas. This addresses complications that occur if the local government and traditional authorities do not work in partnership. The combination of the two in the development creates a huge difference since they have different expertise. Therefore, they can acquire so much knowledge from each other.

## **Chapter 5**

### **5. General Review of the Rural Housing Policy**

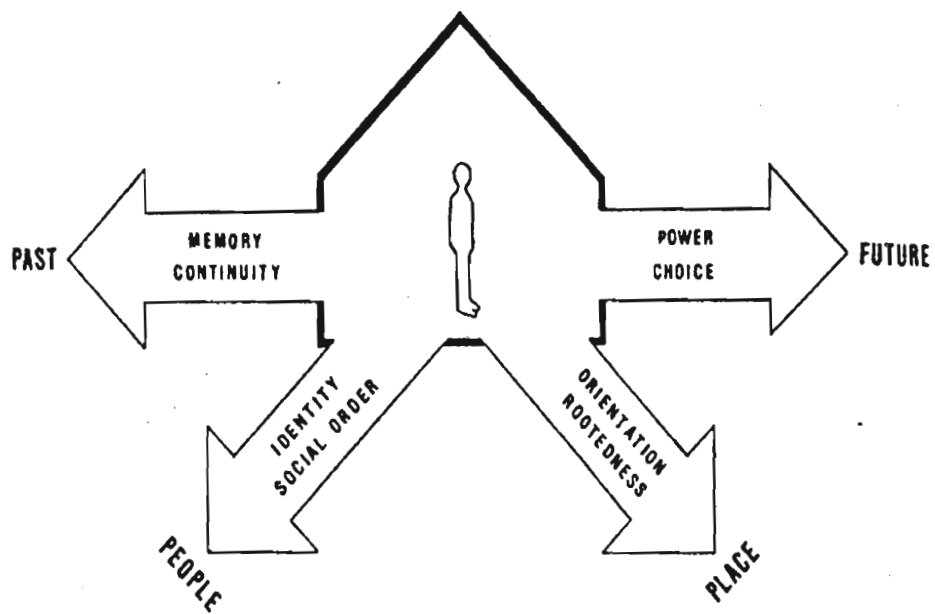
#### **5.1. Introduction**

The chapter attempts to look at relevant factors that one needs to take into account when addressing the unique requirements of rural places to satisfy rural dwellers with houses of their choice. The chapter will also look critically at the current South African Rural Housing Policy, starting with an examination of the nature of the perspectives underlying the provision of rural housing design that is suitable for rural dwellers. It questions how successful the guidelines of the policy have been when addressing the unique requirements of the rural residents by providing housing that relates to their culture and lifestyles. The rural housing policy guidelines will be evaluated to identify gaps within the policy so as to bring about a holistic perspective in the rural housing projects. Data will be drawn from the historical literature reviewing outcomes of policy followed by successive governments, which resulted in present policy guidelines.

It is imperative to understand the meaning of a home before understanding factors that are linked to it. The house is an extremely important aspect of the built environment, embodying personal meanings and expressing and maintaining the ideology of prevailing social orders. Altman (1998) mentions a crucial point about the importance of home when he says that “People are often born, marry, procreate, raise children, work, grow old, die, and function as part of economic, political and social systems in houses” (Altman, 1998). However, houses are used to achieve distinctiveness and individuality and at the same time reflect the bonding of people with one another and with their culture (Altman, 1998). A traditional housing typology can be a reflection of this.

Pama et al (1977) discusses the importance of housing and regards the family as the fundamental unit of a society (Pama et al, 1977). In

this case, the home is a place where one is oriented to who one is and also a space with which one associates experiences. Dovey, (1985) sees this as a process that is complex and connected with the past, future, people and place all being important aspects. This is further illustrated that home connects one with memories, past, future, ones roots and ability to make choices. It also links one to culture, to who one is and to the provision of cultural meaning in ones life (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: Home as connectedness**  
**(Dovey, K : 1985)**

Duncan, (1985) states that “The environment serves as a vast repository out of which symbols of order and social relationships can be fashioned...” Further, the house is seen as something that both flows from and reinforces the structures of society and helps create the environment and culture of people (Duncan, 1985). This factor is illustrated by the role myths and beliefs play with regard to society. “Through myths, the place of the group becomes loaded with symbolic significance. The contours of the land, the hills, and the trees tell the person who he or she is and also the form of the village. The

environment through the medium of symbols concretises the individual's identities..." (Duncan, 1985). Rapoport (1969) agrees with Duncan as he sees a house as an important element in the environment, which varies from society to society in degree of importance as an indicator of identity.

It is vital for developers to understand the relationship between individual, social worlds and the social structure. The way a house is built includes not only physical but also the social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions which then give meaning to the one who occupies it (Arias, 1993). The house is intimately bound to the individual's self-concept, reflecting one's personality, social status and culture. Duncan (1981) argues that in order to understand both attitudes and the use of the house in a range of different societies, one must understand the nature of the social structure in those societies.

The provision of a house without considering the culture and background of an individual leads to the disintegration of various factors that cause confusion with one's sense of belonging and values. Such factors lead to attitudes towards the environment, interaction with the environment and behaviour related to the environment and beliefs being ignored. After all that has been said about housing, land also plays a very important role because without land no development of houses can take place. Factor

Land is the most basic need for rural dwellers. Generally, access to land is one of the necessities in people's lives. In rural areas, besides owning livestock, access to land forms part of one's wealth. Right to land entitles one to economic power. The nature of land, which entails immovability, is credited as the best form of security and such qualities set land apart from other commodities (Bennet et al, 1986). In rural tribal areas, the type of tenure system that is applicable is the customary tenure, although there has been a clash between this

tenure system and what the government desires to happen. Ntombela, (2000) argues that it has been estimated that about 780 000 households live under traditional or officially unrecognised tenure arrangement in predominantly rural areas.

There are still unresolved problems associated with the use and access to land in rural areas. Ntombela (2000) argues that the land is accessed by payment of a certain amount to the Inkosi and the plot is identified by Chief (Inkosi) where the household will have full right to build in the plot. The land rights in the tribal areas are mainly considered in the context of a family other than individuals. The ownership of land is always known to be in the hands of the family head (the man). The eldest son of the family inherits the right to occupy and use the allocated plot if the father dies. Women are allowed to access land and own it, if they head their families.

According to Carter (1990), the major feature of rural settlements is their suitability for agricultural purposes. Agricultural suitability depends on factors such as the availability of land, soil types and rainfall. Agrivillages form part of community development in a sense that they introduce better agricultural means of production. Agrivillages refers to densification in rural areas undertaken through agriculture. Therefore, the formation of Agrivillages in rural areas is due to the fact that agriculture is one of the major sources of livelihood. The improvements make a difference in the lives of rural communities. The non-governmental organisations have identified the major requirements of rural tribal areas in relation to agriculture which involve basic management skills to develop their areas, the necessary equipment for more profit-making farming activities in the rural areas, mature development forums to run their projects as well as co-operatives to create jobs for the majority of rural residents (P.E.A.C.E. Foundation, 1998).

There have been contradicting ideas concerning the powers invested in tribal authorities and their structure which is identified as obstacles towards the development within the rural areas. The authority structures are represented by the chief who has control over a particular domain. Generally, the chief considers the traditional and cultural beliefs above the governmental laws. Therefore, it can be said that the leadership structure or the nature of leadership style that operates in the rural areas is pivotal to the promotion of the housing policy in tribal areas (Ntombela. 2000).

Local authorities act as facilitators in bringing together, within existing local structures, the main interests concerned with rural settlement such as community organisations, organisations representing rural dwellers, country development boards, environmental organisations and any other relevant organisations. They are the ones who identify the need for housing within their boundaries and approve the housing typology that they think is appropriate for the beneficiaries.

According to Keulder (1998), traditional authorities are individuals occupying communal political leadership sanctified by cultural morals and values and enjoying the legitimacy of particular communities to direct their affairs. Their basis of legitimacy includes the whole range of inherited culture and way of life, a people's history, moral and social values and the traditional institutions, which survive to serve those values (Keulder, 1998). Traditional leaders also play a crucial role in rural areas when leading the tribal government, maintaining the local culture, leading ceremonies, applying customary law and promoting the well-being of their communities. Furthermore, they advise central and local government, and assist especially in housing development, planning and implementation. Therefore, traditional leaders have power to influence and inform the developers to choose

the rural housing design that is socially, economically and most of all culturally acceptable for the rural dwellers.

One major reason why traditional leaders continue to exist in this critical time is that their existence is deeply rooted in the culture or tradition of their people. Most traditional leaders have no negative opinions about the new governmental dispensation other than the way these changes are to be implemented. They do hope instead that the new dispensation will give them a better chance to perform their duties than before (Zungu, 1997).

It is clear that the institution of traditional leadership has strong roots. Almost every country in Africa still has a traditional leadership system either incorporated into the government or independent. Zungu (1997) mentions that traditional leadership institutions are not only African countries, even countries like Micronesia still recognise the institution of traditional leadership and it is clear that its future is assured as long as it is flexible with change.

## **5.2. Community participation and rural housing**

Community participation is an active process by which beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of self-reliance, income and self-empowerment (Moser, 1987). Community involvement provides inputs for project design or redesign so that appropriate services are devised and delivered. It is also an instrument for empowerment, where development should lead to an equitable sharing of power and to a higher level of people in particular the poor group's political awareness and strengths.

Planners, architects and other professionals make a contribution in bringing a desirable development to the communities in which they live and work. This further demands that they involve the communities that they work with. Through general observation, some

development programmes are done for the people rather than with the people. Harber (1986) shows the importance of community involvement when he argues that the planners are to appreciate the societies within which they work. It is then possible for the professionals to come together and work towards a policy that will address the housing needs in the rural areas.

For professionals like planners, being involved in the development in rural areas does not only keep them busy, but also enables them to develop a sense of belonging as they have to be responsible for the projects they engage in. Britain's housing affairs policy report states the importance of keeping the spirit of togetherness between the developers and the beneficiaries by arguing that "Our rural heritage is increasingly important for the nation, not simply as a source of food but also as a place of recreation, conservation and environmental protection" (CSM, 1999: 48).

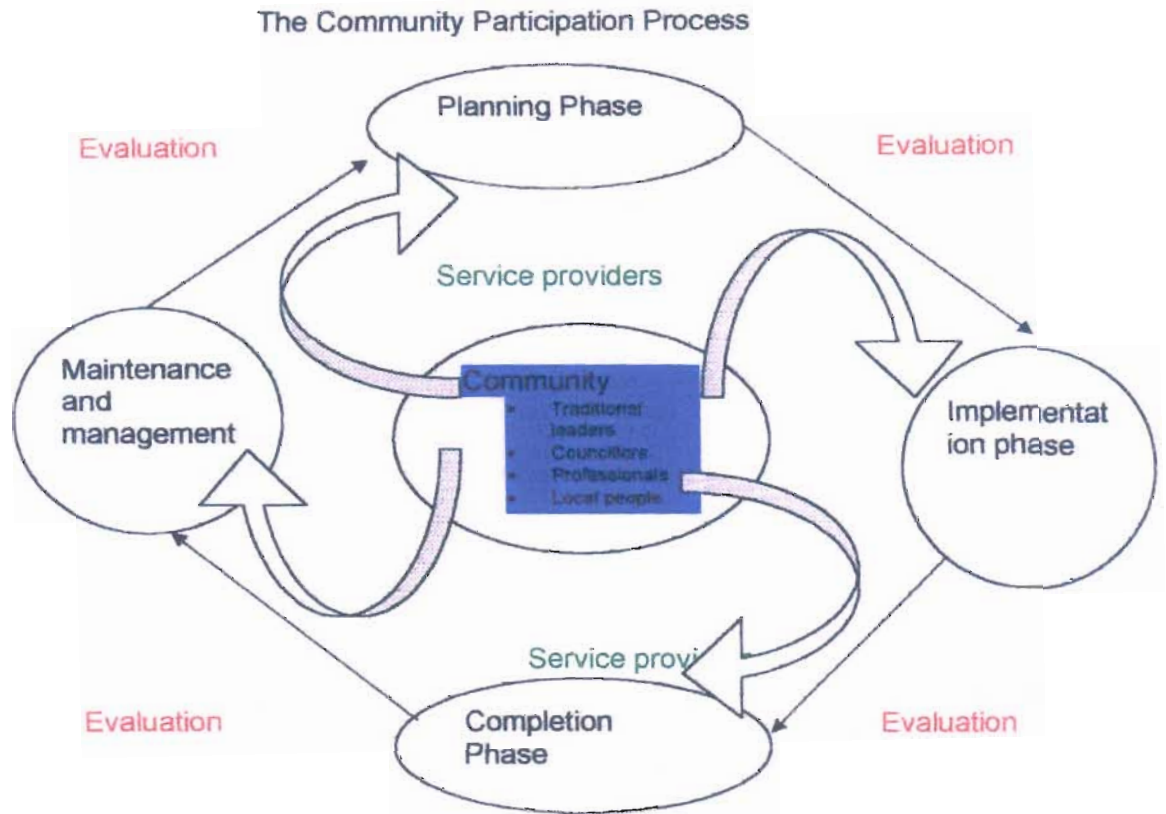
Human development is a crucial process by which an individual develops self-respect and becomes self-confident, self-reliant, cooperative and tolerant of others through becoming aware of his or her shortcomings as well as his or her potential for positive change. Rural housing projects need to take cognisance of development factors before the housing scheme is put in place. Consultation with various groups, members of the community and other role players should be conducted on an ongoing basis as preplanning, so as to enable the developer to understand the entire community.

Community participation is now used as a catchword without people understanding in context what it means and what type of participation is ideal. Community participation in projects design and decision-making is too often limited to a few meetings where projects are explained and the people are asked to give their comments. Participation, if it is to really release the people's own creative energies for development, must be much more than mere mobilization of

labour forces or the coming together to hear about predetermined plans. It must be more than a policy statement; there must be a genuine commitment to encourage participation in all aspects and at all levels of development work (Burkey, 1997:57).

Community participation enables members of the community to voice their opinions about proposed projects, and eventually embrace, own, manage and maintain them. These aspects are critical for the sustainability of any project. The community also indicate to the service provider their way of life and how they would like to be engaged in the implementation process. It is vital for communities to participate in housing projects throughout all stages of project development. Burkey (1993:57), argue that participation is essentially a learning-by-doing exercise-plans are made, action taken, lesson learnt and new plans implemented. Figure 5 below shows the community participation cycle.

In figure 5, the cycle reflects the researcher's conception of how communities participate in development. It illustrates that the communities should be engaged actively in all matters that affect their lives. How actively they participate is a questions that has never been answered satisfactory. However, all stages of development should somehow ensure that there is a buy-in of the community members, the traditional leadership and other major stakeholders in the rural areas. Evaluation is ongoing and it takes place in all stages of development.



**Figure 5: Community Participation cycle (Mthembu, 2001)**

Respect for human dignity is a crucial principle; every individual should be given an opportunity to voice his or her feelings. There should be a conscious effort to respect and enhance the capacity of community members to be informed decision makers through problem solving thus acquiring true management and control of projects. Control of the development process by rural communities will determine whether there has been a transfer of power or not.

Plummer (1983: 84) encourages local people to take part in developing their lives by arguing that:

*One of the principles of my work is to allow people to speak for themselves, to whatever extent this is possible, and in turn to communicate to them, in our conversations as well as in my writing,*

*that it is their words I seek, and not material for the generation of something that ultimately transcends their words and hence their lives.*

### **5.3. South African Rural housing policy**

The National housing vision of South Africa states that:

“Housing is defined as a variety of processes through which habitable, stable and sustainable public and private residential environments are created for viable households and communities”. This recognises that the environment within which a house is situated is as important as the house itself in satisfying the needs and requirements of the occupants (National Housing Policy, 1994)

Most rural African households exist in conditions which could be described as inadequate or intolerable in terms of their access to shelter and basic amenities. Such conditions call for rural development to take place on tribal land. The province has then developed a Provincial policy framework to introduce housing subsidies into tribal areas. This Provincial policy framework seeks to deal with development on tribal or communal land and more specifically land registered in favour of the Ingonyama Trust Board (ITB). This has then led to the rural housing policy manual being introduced to empower Municipal and Department of Housing officials as well as service providers with the information, knowledge and practical skills necessary to successfully undertake rural housing projects and to ensure that this is achieved in an integrated and therefore sustainable manner (De Waal. 1999) This manual has a utility rather than an academic focus in a sense that there is not much prior research conducted in this field of study.

The Rural Housing policy manual acts as a guide that provides a practical step-by-step guide for undertaking integrated rural housing development based on best practice, promote sustainable development

through facilitating a more integrated development approach, reinforce and disseminate key integrated development planning principles and bridge the gap between IDP's and delivery of integrated and therefore sustainable development at the local, project level. The policy also sees a need of integrating housing projects with other development projects such as agricultural, HIV/AIDS relief and economic development so as to ensure rural development sustainability and viability. The integration of projects benefits the rural communities from the grassroots level. For instance, the rural housing programs create and improve people's living environments and socio-economic conditions.

The South African housing policy is formulated around the enabling approach where state assistance in the form of a capital subsidy grant is given to households in need in a way that will maximise the options available to enhance and strengthen the poor people's own efforts and initiatives to improve their housing needs( Housing White Paper,1994). In most housing projects of this nature, core houses have remained unimproved for more than five years (Smit, 1998). This is due to the fact that rural residents are unable to get bridging finance to start their projects. These shortcomings include lack of economy scale due to unemployment. As a result, the White Paper has been criticised for being unable to provide appropriate economic viability such as employment and sustainability and yet rural areas are incapable for employment –creation potential, and affordability. Another problem is also caused by the use of urban type design in rural areas. Application of urban design in rural areas uses western material that is costly and it is labour intensive unlike traditional housing that uses local material that is easily accessible and it is not labour intensive. Therefore, it is much easier to improve a traditional house than an urban one.

There has been new development within the government that has emerged in order to improve the delivery systems within the rural settings. The recent reports have shown quite a number of projects that have been executed through the People's Housing Process (PHP). The PHP, which is the framework adopted by the South African government to support the former, and contained in the Housing code has been used to poor communities to meet their human settlement needs with various degrees of state acquiescence and support. The PHP is encouraging people to self-built houses for themselves. The PHP appreciate the importance of self-built settlements because the state finds it hard to accommodate its citizens due to house expanding populations. PHP is more than a 'delivery mechanism' it also a social process, which self-built the neighbourhoods that belong to the people and bind them together

A case study can be drawn from Britain where surveyors and planners come together to work on developing a policy for rural affairs. This holistic intervention included the form of a common Agricultural Policy, the use of Village Design Statements, Transport, housing and the integration of rural strategies by government (CSM, 1999). The issues that are being addressed in Britain are similar to those that are imprinted in this study. The vision of the British proposed policy has a broader scope, than being limited to the most common (CSM, 1999).

The British experience proves the increasing number of agencies that are already at work in rural areas (CSM, 1999). This is identified as an important strategy that their activities be coordinated to ensure best use of public funds and maximum benefit of their rural areas. This coordination seems to exist among all levels of government ( Mthembu, 2000) However, from the report that was made by the planners and surveyors, a few important recommendations were made, which can also be a challenge for the South African context. The recommendations include conserving the rural environment,

sustaining communities, and maintaining sustainable economies. The British case study addresses unique requirements that rural housing policy should take into consideration when dealing with rural areas. South Africa can learn from this experience and then challenge South African Rural Housing Policy to take such concerns into account.

There is a need for an institutional home in rural areas since the existing structures and institutions have been designed to focus mostly on urban housing needs. It is time for rural areas to be accommodated. This acts as an attempt to ensure representation of rural interest at provincial, national and local level.

The patterns of culture and housing are very important in determining good housing design more especially in rural areas. Design of housing does reflect the sum of the cultural forces that exist in the society, the values of those in power who make decisions and those responsible for designing the public policies, programs, and processes of delivering housing to the population. One may argue that housing form determines culture although it can impose some restrictions on behavioural possibilities. Lang (1980) argues that “assuming that one of the goals of housing policies is to design culturally congruent environments, one with which people are happy and wish to live giving their resources an understanding of the past and present uses and abuses of housing areas suggests how the housing design should be done and the general direction in which housing policy goals should trend” (Lang, 1980: 378).

There have been numerous changes in policies and legislations relating to rural development over the past 10 years, which have resulted in a policy environment that is currently more conducive to effective and integrated rural development (Spiegel, Watson, and Wilkison, 1999). The main policy framework, relates to the role of Local Government in the provision of services to communities so as to

create an environment that is based on the needs and wants of the beneficiaries. It was argued that South African Housing policy is strongly influenced by supply side considerations appears to be based on certain unexamined and possibly over simplistic, assumptions about the needs and priorities of potential beneficiaries (Spiegel, Watson, and Wilkison.1999).

The current rural housing policy guidelines in the manual focus on the provision of housing to the poor especially in remote areas and does not state anything about rural housing design that should be in use for rural communities. As a result, the shortage of relevant literature or information made a researcher to utilize the available resources and also rely a lot on the practical experiences in this field of housing.

The Rural Housing Policy does not address the issue of socio-cultural amenities which the White Paper (1994) indicated needs to be addressed and it raise questions about the ability of government to provide technical support and what this will involve. However, in terms of housing design, method of construction, and choice of building materials, White Paper must leave the door open for more holistic and traditional ways of building, which could deviate from models employed by current government policy (De Waal, 1999). This will also open a discussion on the issue of broader perspectives.

Rubenstein and Rust (1996) have identified some obstacles towards the success of rural housing policy, with specific reference to the South African context, which are:

- Lack of accurate information in respect of rural need to inform fund allocation process at a national level
- Difficulty in facilitating the cross-sectoral linkages that are crucial in addressing rural needs

- Urban bias in Provincial Housing Departments
- Lack of dedicated rural capacity in rural communities in the context of a housing subsidy allocation process that is demand-driven.
- The absence of effective rural local government.
- Difficulty in facilitating the cross-sectoral linkages that is crucial in addressing rural needs.
- Rejection of rural values due to modernisation.

Looking at traditional housing which has emerged through a long process of trial and error helps architects and anthropologists alike to understand the important variables that should be considered in designing the layout of the built environment. Housing adjustments are made to show different housing types over the generations because the house form fits basic cultural patterns. Meadearis (1977) sees a house as a reflection of the self and the surroundings when saying that:

*“We live in a world in which all is interrelated. Everything in the environment has an effect in some degree on a person’s mental, physical and spiritual well-being. In the past years, people have been viewing the physical as being a reality different from the mental and spiritual. A house was considered shelter independently of everything else...”* (Meadearis, 1977)

The rural housing policy guidelines ensure the tribal authorities’ power in developing their areas by saying that:

*“The existing guidelines for the use of institutional subsidies or PLS projects will remain applicable to rural development where the Amakhosi are not opposed to the Section 21 company being used as*

*developer or wishes to establish a town in terms of the PLS policy. The Amakhosi would be allowed to make a project application for a housing project using any of the available subsidy instruments” (Additional Rural Guidelines, 2003).*

The concept of integrated development has been the topic of many policy documents and publications prepared by National, Provincial and Local spheres of Government as well as the private sector since 1994. Due to the severe development backlogs in rural areas, these areas have become the target of special focus for integrated development strategies and initiatives. There are however numerous challenges in achieving integrated rural development which has a significant yet negative impact on the implementation of integrated rural development. Many of these initiatives have failed due to the lack of effective participation of the local communities or a lack of basic situational analysis, primary ingredients in all integrated development planning processes.

All of these clearly express socialist sentiment with regard to a more holistic approach in terms of Rural Housing policy having to be flexible regarding housing needs. This has not been evidenced in the outcome of policy that is housing on the ground (Haffajee, 1997).

The Socialist perspectives in the document are indicated by factors such as that government must “give priority to the needs of the poor...” In giving priority one has to “consult meaningfully with individuals and communities... provide as a wide choice of housing and tenure options... encourage and support individuals and communities in their efforts to fulfil their own housing needs...” (ibid) While this support a wider view point of housing provision, it is still based on limited economic and socialist perspectives. This is indicated in the Bill of Rights that the government hopes to promote “the establishment, development and maintenance of socially and

economically viable communities...to prohibit unfair discrimination on the ground of gender and other forms of unfair discrimination by all actors in the housing development process... the meeting of special housing needs...the provision of community ...the housing needs of marginalized women...the expression of cultural identity..." (ibid)

Having assessed the rural housing policy locally, the next step is to assess it against similar international policies. International perspectives have revealed ways in which governments have intervened or refrained from intervention in the housing sector. It is noted that "...despite the enormous range of cultural and economic differences among nations, in actual practice the ways that governments intervene in housing are not as diverse as might be applied as first glance..." (McGuire,1981:112). On one hand, the centrally planned economies of the socialist countries view housing as a social right and hence assume responsibility for the provision of housing. At the other end are the market economies, in which the individual bears responsibility for housing himself..." (McGuire, 1981)

The above- mentioned extremes have dominated policies with regard to housing (Short, 1989; Lisk, 1985). These housing policies were considered 'the major cleavage in the world community' at some stage (Short, 1989). It is very crucial to consider how international countries have moulded policy in other countries and to utilise these as a comparison for South Africa. It is also of great interest to consider whether these perspectives really work at all. Few countries have been chosen to reflect the diversity of the policy and policies that have relationship to South Africa. In this case, the market policy and socialist policy approaches will be used to give some clarity, hoping that other countries like South Africa can take perspectives that are suitable for the citizens.

#### **5.4 Market policy approach**

In America, the provision of housing has been market led with very little interference by government. The reason behind is that the market can create both the quality and quantity of housing that consumers need, based on what they can afford (McGuire, 1981). The provision of housing by the American market has been successful. The bulk of the funds in the mortgage market come from savings of individual households through: Savings and Loan Associations (56%); Commercial Banks (22,3%); Mutual Savings Banks (5,1%) and Mortgage Companies (14,4%) with the 3,6% being from other sources. These numbers shows that 95% of the Americans are well housed as their houses are in good condition and they are satisfied with their present housing( McGuire,1981).

In comparing this with South African policy it can be seen that there is common interest that the market can provide quality housing if stimulated by the government, this has been shown by the application of a number of fiscal policies including subsidy provision (McGuire, 1981). The idea of using Banks and savings as a facilitator is failing in South Africa mostly because there are no enough savings to stimulate the market. South African Banks seem to have difficulties in financing the lower income earners or unemployed people because they do not have valuable collateral to hold on to so as to make the process viable. Rural people especially are not well informed about their rights in terms of borrowing money.

The American market seems to experience housing problems within the low-income sector of the market. South Africa is also experiencing the same problem. The subsidy provides basic housing that does not satisfy people's needs as the approach is to disregard any community participation in the provision of housing and to utilise a top down approach (Fieldman, 1992). There has been a similar approach in South Africa until recently.

The influence of Britain and British systems on South Africa, as a former colony of Britain is notable. In examining British housing policy it is interesting to note that housing is a political issue in Britain and “controversies over the roles of public and private investment in housing have been ranging since the turn of the century...” (McGuire, 1981: 113).

Conservative and Labour parties are known for their different approach, the former advocating private sector investment, the latter state control, a reflection of economic and socialist perceptions. It has parallels to South Africa, in that housing has been politicised around these approaches.

The wealthiest countries like America and Britain seem to experience problems when trying to cater for the poorest of the poor. This seems to be the issue even with the third world country, South Africa especially in rural areas where people have been previously disadvantaged. Therefore, rural people should be encouraged to use their natural skills in building houses of their choices although there is still a need to train them to make their houses durable.

### **5.5. Socialist policy approach**

Mozambique has a long history of interventions. During colonisation, housing was principally in the hands of the private sector (de Waal, 1999) Development like many other places was largely unplanned and for the local population largely underdeveloped (de Waal, 1999).

After independence, a housing policy stressed the need to redress the balance between urban and rural areas. The state then evolved a policy of direct intervention in housing and the building of houses for people. In 1977, self-help construction programmes and housing construction co-operatives were introduced. Support was also given

for credit and savings schemes linked to housing. Thereafter, there was a need to conduct a study so as to improve traditional housing and training programmes for planning and developing communal villages involving 45 000 residents. Upgrading existing housing with new methods was undertaken. The intention of the policy was good in a sense that it attempted to work with the community and involving the community with housing programmes (de Waal, 1999).

In 1981, direct state intervention led into the completion of apartments and other new construction, resulting in 147 150 units being built. In 1987, the World Bank intervened to work hand in hand with the state (Jenkins, 1990). They both encouraged development of individual houses for sale purposes and the development of site and service upgrades (Jenkins, 1990). These changes show the importance of partnership which speeds up the process. The state cannot do everything on its own and it cannot also impose arbitrarily solutions on the communities. The same applies with South Africa, it is important to take the opinions of the communities into consideration.

South Africa has seen a need to include other role players to in the rural housing field for example, persons in the construction industry, private investors, and business and community leaders. However, these professionals need to be integrated especially in decision making and use their intensive knowledge and experience to influence the policy makers about the needs of the rural communities. In that way, rural housing policy can be rural friendly and provide better delivery and appropriate housing that contribute to local identity.

Tanzania is mainly an agricultural country with 90 percent of the population engaged in this (Nuru, 1990). Building and loan Associations were introduced to encourage people to assist each other. Site and services programmes increased in subsequent years, partly because they received international funding (Nuru, 1990).

(Ibid) sees policy as “a sort of patchwork” mostly because it emphasizes self-reliance and self-help. Subsidies are not an option except for senior civil servants. The civil servant consumes the bulk of money allocated to housing. Due to shortages, traditional building materials are also becoming more and more difficult to obtain.

The lessons to be learnt from Tanzania are that self-help housing does not work if the government provides inadequate assistance in passing on skills. The problems that arise within rural housing policy leave options on traditional ways of building housing, which is not so disastrous because traditional building has a more holistic approach. If the government were to utilise these skills properly, it could probably house its people better, a good lesson for South Africa.

The chapter shows the pros and cons of the state intervention. There are many problems where government is the main provider because the beneficiaries tend to sit back and relax and wait for the state instead of developing themselves such that they have a source of income. Britain sees a need to integrate housing projects with other developments projects so as to bring about socio-economic sustainability. Other African countries like Mozambique and others utilise available resources profitably, and as a result it becomes easier to find outside help since they commit themselves in local economic development.

## **Chapter 6**

### **6. Rural-urban linkages and impact of housing**

Rural and urban areas are influenced by different cultural, social and economic factors which determine the housing design used in that particular area. Rural villages commonly use traditional housing since they are still attached to their customs and cultural practices. These forms of housing contribute to local identity of the place. The urban housing on the other hand is influenced by the modernity and technology. These areas do not have specific identity because they consist of people from different backgrounds. What characterises the place is the survival of the fittest.

Rural settlement pattern is scattered and forming round shape. Rural people have enough space that they may use according to their needs. For example, rural dwellers mostly depend on agriculture to sustain themselves and their families. The settlement structure has privacy unlike urban areas where people have multi-roomed house that is separated by walls, which then results to privacy that is very minimal.

In rural places, households have knowledge on how to construct their houses. The skills they have were acquired from their parents and great parents and they also wish to pass them to the next generation. Both men and women engage themselves when constructing their houses using the local material which is the material that they can afford. Most people are involved in informal sector unlike in urban areas where most people are in formal sector. In urban areas, people have little knowledge on how to build their houses. It is only men that construct houses. The material used for construction has to be bought and it is costly. Money is a mere factor. Table 1 below briefly shows the rural-urban linkages that have been discussed above.

## Summary table of rural – urban differences

Rural areas	Urban areas
<b>Cultural, social and economic context</b>	
Mainly traditional rural setting	Mainly modern urban setting
Subsistence economy	Market (cash) economy
Indigenous knowledge system	Knowledge system based on transferred technology
Custom law	Official legal system
Village identity	No clear identity
Dwelling integrated part of household	Dwelling regarded as commodity
<b>Use of space</b>	
Mainly outdoor living	More indoor living
Lots of space	Limited space
Space may be used according to one's needs	Space can rarely be used according to individual needs
Much privacy; dwelling for owner's household only	Little privacy; dwelling often includes rooms for tenants
<b>Housing, provision of food and income</b>	
<i>Housing</i>	
Household has much knowledge of constructing a house and lots of influence on its design	Household has little knowledge of constructing a dwelling and little influence on its design
Low building costs because of use of natural materials	High building costs because materials have to be purchased
Time and manpower most important resources	Money most important resource
Women and men build houses	Men build houses
<i>Income generating activities</i>	
Agricultural activities, mainly cattle breeding and small scale subsistence farming	Activities based on cash economy, often in informal sector, some subsistence home gardening
Mainly regular, periodic activities	Often irregular, temporary or casual activities
Extremely vulnerable to drought events	Some vulnerability to drought
Most food is produced	Most food must be purchased

**Table 1: Rural-urban differences**  
**Larsson, 1990 and Kruger, 1997**

Urban and rural areas are closely linked, each contributing to the other. Historically, migration has been a key factor in shaping Africa's settlement patterns and households' livelihoods. A focus in rural-urban interactions involves attention to changes in livelihood

strategies and to the reasons underlying these changes. Such changes influence access to assets, which include natural resources like land, labour and capital (education, skills and health), and financial capital including access to credit (Larsson, 1995). Housing development is therefore determined and influenced by these factors.

Urbanisation and declining returns from agriculture mean that rural-urban interactions and linkages play an increasingly important role in local economies and in the livelihood of large numbers of people (Larsson, 1995). However, the economic crisis affects both rural and urban African populations. Small production is negatively affected by the cost of agricultural inputs and consumer goods rising faster than the prices of agricultural produce. This result in changes in livelihood strategies along two main lines, a widespread increase in mobility accompanied by strong social and economic links with rural areas (Larsson, 1995). However, variations in socio-economic, political, cultural, historical and geographical contexts both between and within nations affect the scope and nature of the linkages between towns and countryside. Therefore, trends in flows of people, goods, money and information, and patterns of occupational diversification reflect a dynamic process of economic, social and cultural transformation which needs to be better understood. This is especially crucial for the formulation of rural policies aiming to create a holistic approach in rural development especially in housing (Tacoli, 1998).

Rural areas are different to the urban ones in terms of their ties to tradition. The Traditional oriented people have very strong ties to traditions and their perception to urban life contains several negative aspects. Ties to tradition includes attitude to burial in a village, actual housing development in home-village, sense of belonging to a village and the creation of a village-home. Perceptions of urban life includes attitudes to means of making a living, perception of town-life as permanent, perceptions of access to service and entertainment and sense of independence (Larsson, 1995).

Housing in rural areas is under strong urban influence in a sense that the developers adopt and copy designs on the experience of the urban areas (Taylor et al, 1994). These kinds of houses do not incorporate history and cultural values for rural dwellers. It is noted that the basic differences that exist between rural and urban areas presuppose that rural housing delivery requires a substantially different approach to the one applied in urban areas. It is interesting to examine the impact of cultural, historical and contemporary design practices. Traditional African architectural forms are represented to illustrate significant elements of style, its implications on contemporary design practices in traditional African architecture. African styles are built of stepped thatch and houses are usually round planned often dome shaped. Pliable materials, woven mats, and animal skins are often used. Therefore, rural and urban areas need to use the material that is easily accessible and affordable to them. Most people who migrate from rural to urban areas reside in the squatter settlement and build their houses using the natural material that they were using in rural areas such as mud and twigs. However, because of the shortage of natural material, they end up using both natural and urban material that seems to be available and affordable at the time.

Taylor et al (1994) argue that historically it has been assumed that norms and systems arising from a particular set of experiences in the developed (urban areas) world can be readily adopted by developing areas (rural areas). In this case, you find rural areas abandoning their own style by going for urban style. This act tends to manipulate rural people to put themselves in the same level as the urban areas and yet their economic status, location, practices and settlement patterns are totally different from each other. It is completely inappropriate to apply urban principles in rural areas without any modifications. Some people may argue that it is time to bring whatever is in urban areas to rural areas so as to bring about equality. This is easier said than done, in order to bring sustainable development in rural areas there

must be a clear understanding of political, economic, social and development issues of a place. Therefore, appropriate design for rural communities becomes an integral part of sustainable development.

There are so many factors that make people migrate from their places of origin to urban areas. The factors that push people away are the decrease of the economy that leads to a shortage of employment. Natural disasters can force people to leave to urban areas. Some people strongly feel that cultural practices in rural areas are forms of oppression since they represent the backwardness. These people then leave to urban areas so as to develop and improve their lives. Under the pull factors, people migrate for green pastures. These people are attracted by the opportunities that urban areas offer compared to their place of origin. The opportunities include education, housing, schools, basic amenities and good climatic conditions. Table 2 below shows both push and pull factors, which influence people to look for better places to live where there are great job opportunities so as to improve their standard of living.

<b><u>Push factors</u></b>	<b><u>Pull factors</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decline of regional income, causing localised recession</li> <li>• Loss of employment (from causes other than recession, e.g. mechanisation).</li> <li>• Political, religious, ethnic and/or other forms of oppression or discrimination.</li> <li>• Little or no pathway to increase personal development in structures such as marriage, status or career.</li> <li>• Catastrophe e.g. floods, earthquakes, war etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived superior opportunities in another location.</li> <li>• Greater income in another place.</li> <li>• Personal growth opportunities such as better education, group association etc.</li> <li>• Preferable environment, such as climate, housing, schools and/or other institutional facilities.</li> <li>• Desire to be with kin, or other favourable people, in another place.</li> <li>• Lure of different social or physical activities in another place.</li> </ul>

Source: Bogue (cited in Moon, 1995)

**Table 2:** Bogue's push and pull factors

There is a great need for an appreciation of the role of rural housing in slowing down rural-urban migration, thereby reducing rural depopulation and urban squatting, which requires a clear understanding of the reasons why people migrate from rural to urban areas. The Unicef Report (1994) has singled out three objectives of rural-urban migration which is the pursuit of economic opportunities, the availability of socio-cultural facilities for living including housing and attraction of the modern urban environment, which symbolises dynamism that is revolutionary in many ways compared to the rural. The main point here is that if rural areas could provide for all the above objectives and economic opportunities, the rural-urban migration process would decrease and the social fabric would be revived. Economic activities need to be organized so as to create job opportunities commensurate with the educational achievements of rural youth (Todaro, 1977).

Todaro (1977:75) stresses the problem of rapid urbanisation where rural-urban migration is causing the labour force to 'explode' at annual rates of 6-9% in many countries especially those in Africa (Todaro, 1977). On the other hand, the prospects for coping effectively with rising levels of unemployment, frustrations and anxieties of an increasing of number of unemployed youth are frightening. The rapid urbanisation gives rise to serious problems such as unemployment, lowered wage rates, serious overcrowding and the consequent growth of slums and squatter areas, overburdening of water, sewerage, and cleansing. It is noticeable that the draining of productive people and economic, educational, health services in rural areas causes agricultural production to deteriorate (Todaro, 1977).

The study shows problems that have occurred especially in projects that have been packaged in rural areas using urban type design. This shows that it is very easy to sweep away traditional patterns of settlement in the hope of creating a brand new world. Such changes

create conflict between rural people and their built environment that have been ignored in the new development. It is still a challenge to mitigate problems that have been mentioned objectively without any compromise from both sides.

It is now widely recognized that there exists an economic, social and environmental interdependence between urban and rural areas and a need for balanced and mutually supportive approach to development of the two areas. The discrete consideration of rural development as completely distinct from urban development is no longer valid. A new perspective, referred to as the rural-urban linkage development approach, is increasingly becoming the accepted approach. Rural-urban linkage generally refers to the growing flow of public and private capital, people (migration and commuting) and goods (trade) between urban and rural areas. It is important to add to these the flow of ideas, the flow of information and the flow of diffusion of innovation (Okpara: 2001).

In light of the above-mentioned linkages the identity and values of the society should not be lost to consumerism world, since rural housing design plays a very significance role in people's lives as it reflects their history, living patterns and the quality of future built environment.

# MAP: LOCATION OF STUDY AREA



Study Area

## CHAPTER 7

### 7. Data presentation and analysis

#### 7.1. Introduction

The chapter mainly deals with the overview of the area that was selected as a case study. The primary research was categorised into two sections, conducting interviews and administering questionnaires for data collection. Focus groups discussion was used to compare the responses with different groups of respondents from Mpukunyoni. The research undertaken establishes the importance of using rural housing design, which plays a significance role as a reflection of one's self, culture and origin. General findings from the respondents were presented using both quantitative and qualitative form. Observation technique was also used to compare rural and urban areas in relation to the key issues affecting rural settlement patterns and housing design so as to scrutinise rural situations in depth and add some clarity where necessary. All of this was done so as to create awareness about rural characteristics and suggest some strategies towards the development of a more holistic approach in providing rural housing that contribute to local identity.

The topography of the case study area is mainly flat, with distant mountains. Mpukunyoni is predominantly rural area that consists of the Zulu speaking residents and houses are built in a traditional style. The area is situated in the Hlabisa Municipality and it consists of **five wards** namely, Ngqopheni, Nkombose, Phaphasi, Makhambane, and Ogengele. These wards are tribal areas, and all under a tribal chief, Mkhwanazi with the help of *izinduna*. The rural population in Mpukunyoni live in scattered multigenerational homesteads.




The researcher has seen a need to look at the influences that cultural factors have on the housing design used. It is true that in tribal areas everything revolves around culture. Lamont, (1991) suggested that before implementing any project in the traditional rural areas, socio-

anthropological research should be done. The research mainly observes the housing situation in Mpukunyoni in order to get opinions with regards to the beneficiaries' satisfaction of their housing design. Most importantly, the views of the respondents have a great impact on rural housing architecture.

In rural areas, the housing design is used as a symbol of culture preservation from one generation to the other. It is vital to analyse the development strategy adopted at Mpukunyoni, which led to the use of urban design in tribal areas. Therefore, to view the case study is very important and raises various aspects to be considered so that next generation trace and understand their tribe's history through the design used. As a result, the rural housing policy can then formulate a policy that respect people's tradition and social structure.

The housing types found at Mpukunyoni can be categorised into two, the traditional and the modern houses. Traditional type applies to houses built of traditional material mainly stones, mud, and grass and modern type is built on western material and architecture. The modern houses are built of concrete blocks, corrugated iron or tiles. There were few households that consisted of big-houses (multi-roomed), which are durable and at the same time shows relative sophistication and likelihood to 'accept' transformations. Thus, the prevalence of multi roomed houses in rural areas is an indicator of housing that is of a high quality. However, there is another category of houses that have the combination of both as they are designed in a modern way but still using local material. This houses known as flats (izifuladi) seem to be as popular as the rondavels. These housing types for sixty respondents will be shown by table 3 below. Table 3 indicates houses on site and this method has been taken from Ntombela 2000 studies to show various housing typology. A total of 60 beneficiaries illustrates that there were 63 rondavels, 69 flat roof form and 10 three divisional housing typology in total. (Ntombela, 2000).

**A DIAGRAMIC ILLUSTRATION OF THE TYPES OF HOUSES AT  
MPUKUNYONI**

HOUSE NO.	RONDAVEI 	FLAT 	BIG-HOUSE 
1	1	2	
2	2	1	
3	1	1	
4	1		1
5	2	3	
6	1	2	
7	1		
8	1	1	
9	1	2	
10		1	1
11	2		
12	1	3	
13	1	1	
14	1		1
15	2	1	
16	1	1	
17	1	2	
18	1	1	
19			1
20	1	1	
21	1	2	
22			1
23	2	1	
24	1	2	
25	1	1	
26	1	1	
27		1	
28	1	1	
29	1	2	
30		1	
31	1	2	
32			1
33	2	2	
34	2	1	
35	1	2	
36	1		
37	1	1	
38		2	
39	1		1
40		2	
41	2	2	

42		3	
43	1	2	
44	1	1	
45			1
46	2	2	
47	1		
48	1	1	
49	1	1	
50	1	1	
51	2		
52			1
53	2	1	
54	1	1	
55	2		
56	1	1	
57	2	1	
58	1	3	
59	2	2	
60	1		1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>10</b>

**Table 3:** Types of houses at Mpukunyoni

(Ntombela, 2000)

Table 3 shows the number of houses for each household selected and predicted the estimations of income. For instance, the people who occupied big houses and flats using western material are regarded as people with the potential to be innovative in building their houses, in addition their income falls between middle and upper income. These people needed some assistance with the refurbishment of their existing houses during housing project implementation. However, most houses were still in good condition but had some minor problems with the roofing that usually leaks on rainy days often spoiling the furniture in the house. As a result, they asked for the roofing material instead and running water in their homes. Most of the traditional houses were of poor quality and small size; this implies that their owner's income is very low. These, therefore were the people that were on top of the list during the identification of the beneficiaries to benefit from the housing subsidy project. Plate 7 and 8 below shows houses that were of first priority.



**Plate 7:** Subsidy Housing in Mpukunyoni area

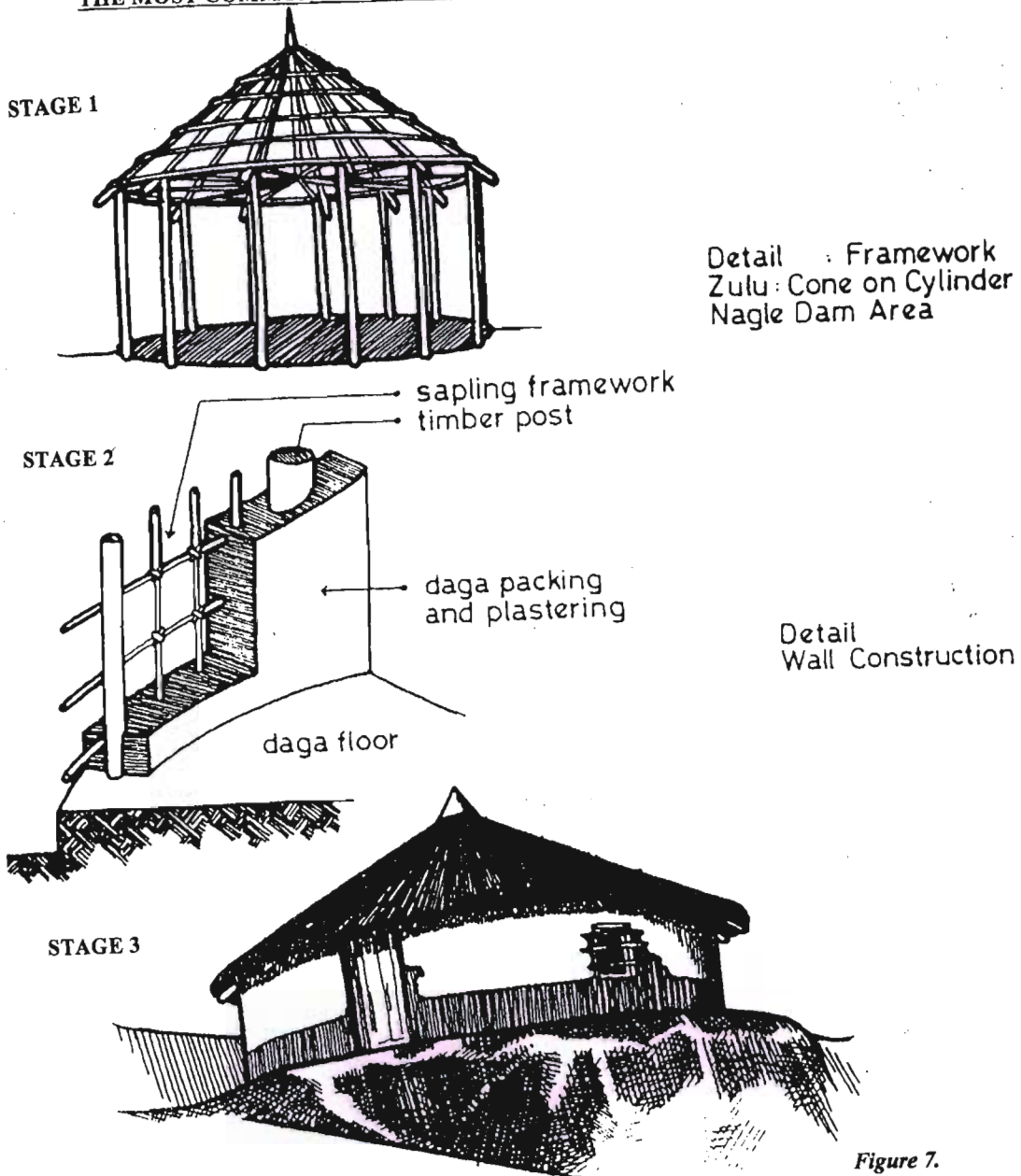


**Plate 8:** Subsidy Housing in Mpukunyoni area

In Mpukunyoni, the building type shows the hierarchy of housing form found in rural areas. There has been a shift in the housing designs and material used for construction due to the transformations that have taken place in rural areas. In the past, the houses that were common in the rural areas were the Beehives. The Beehives were then followed by the Rondavels, which are presently regarded popular in

Mpukunyoni area. Figure 6 below shows the traditional housing typology that is familiar among the Zulus. It is local material such as timber and mud is used for constructing these traditional housing.

THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF A TRADITIONAL HOUSE AMONG THE ZULUS



**Figure 6: The structure of a Zulu traditional house**

(Frescura, 1984)

## **7.2. Process, management & structures in rural housing project**

The research was undertaken for a period of six months. But some of the days were wasted waiting for the housing officials who failed to keep their commitments. The researcher started by making appointments telephonically to set up interview schedules. The actual visit to the area where the information was collected was done between September and October. The study was carried out in two wards, namely, Ngqopheni and Nkombose, which are under the leadership of inkosi Mkhwanazi.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with three housing officials namely, the project manager, the Director who specialises in policy from Provincial Housing Department, and the tribal authority mainly to request their opinions regarding rural housing design that is culturally suitable for rural communities. This was also to find out whether these officials had a favourable opinion of more holistic options, as well as their satisfaction with rural housing typology as it is at present.

The housing officials were selected by virtue of their expertise in the subject which gives them power to influence decision made. These people were also used to elicit useful information about the relationship between the tribal and local authorities when packaging housing projects in rural areas. The researcher also scrutinised the guidelines on the current rural housing policy in relation to the development of the rural housing design that suits people's needs.

### **Management in rural housing project**

The first interview was conducted with the project manager from Mpukunyoni. He reported what his work entails getting involved throughout the whole housing project. He acts as a mediator, facilitator and co-ordinator between local authority from Mpukunyoni

area, department of housing and community. He also assembles professional team to work on the project and identifies the beneficiaries (those that earn below R3 500 as long as they are South Africans, dependents, own no other house, book of life (dompasi) and over the age of 21). During the implementation of the project, the project manager ensures that the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is adhered to, and local community beneficiaries participate on the actual construction throughout all phases of development.

The project manager reported that everybody in the community participated in the housing project. He sees rural communities as being the most advantageous since the South African government has set procedures and guidelines to assist the poorest of the poor by providing shelter. The beneficiaries cannot afford to build houses for themselves and cannot be assisted by the financial institutions such as home loans. The economic status of rural people disqualifies them from attaining loans, since they do not have the valuable collateral to put in and most work in informal sector. Most respondents were pensioners and housewives which indicate poor income that in turn reduces people's ability to make savings that can help them with the maintenance of their houses. Therefore, the only way that government can reach out to the poor is to provide more projects within their areas, as project that does not only provide housing but job opportunities as well.

The relationship between local and tribal authorities is influenced by various factors. The government has not yet provided a policy that best suits the rural development in which various responsibilities and roles between municipalities and tribal authorities are clearly defined. This sometimes creates conflict between these authorities, especially in the cases where the municipality wants to develop and does not own the land. In some instances the municipality councillors have a tendency to ignore the traditional structures and their protocol when

initiating development and this result in major objections and the project does not take off or if it does, it does not meet the beneficiaries' needs.

The project manager also mentioned that the municipality's opinion towards the provision of traditional housing in rural areas is not what the institution wants but what the communities needs. This implies theoretically that people from the community are free to choose the housing design as long as what they want is within the budget. Consequently, it should be noted that on the low cost housing there is not so much choice to apply decent design on the houses due to budget constraints. The main objective is to provide a meaningful sized house that can withstand the South African harsh weather conditions as opposed to mud houses that fall down after heavy rains and storms. When choosing appropriate design for rural people, various plans are presented and discussed with the beneficiaries and the one that best suit their need is then selected.

The local identity of the area depends on the type of houses provided. If houses provided by people themselves are inferior, the municipality then ensures that the new houses do contribute to and improve the image of the entire area. This type of development does not affect the existing Land Use Management (LUM) since all houses are built within the existing homesteads.

Clearly, the design suitable for the rural development is the one that is able to withstand South African harsh weather conditions. Because of insufficient funding for the project, house designs were going to be made on a traditional basis, maybe rondavels with thatched grass equipped with modern material such as concrete bricks, water sanitation and electricity. This can then provide more cultural activities for different families and at the same time become an income generating through tourism by providing accommodation. Even

though the community has the choice on housing they have the limited budget constraints to consider.

Constraints in housing development in tribal areas are caused by the government policies and government failure in making project payments in time. Political conflicts also create major constraints on the projects. In addition, the land formation on rural traditional areas is under Ingonyama Trust; sometimes it very difficult to deal with land for development.

The project manager suggested that one of the guidelines for developing more appropriate rural housing that suits rural communities would be to look at the existing Town Planning Legislations that are meant to facilitate development such as Development Facilitation Act (DFA). Such legislation needs to be amended to suit rural development especially on areas that are still attached to their tradition. Traditional structures need to be transformed and recognised by the legislation as the best mechanism to be used for the development in rural areas.

The project manager addresses serious problems with the quality of rural housing, which mainly focuses on the ability of the standard of housing to provide protection against rain, wind, and cold weather and then the focus on provision of services. Such aspects make the durability of houses to be crucial. The durability of houses from the case study could be identified on the basis of the building material used. Most houses that already exist, traditionally styled, using mud-brick, stones, very old and cheap corrugated iron and thatched grass. The thatched grass used for roofing need to be gathered or bought. The major problem with this type of roofing is that it has to be renewed frequently. Otherwise, this kind of roofing would be the cheapest.

According to the housing official interviewed by the author, the provision of the traditional building structure that suits rural settings has been looked at. There seems to be more negative consequences predicted, as compared to the positive. A problem with the use of traditional material includes the delay with the length of time that is required to take to collect the construction material. For example, cutting grass for construction is seasonal and preparing grass for construction also takes time. The use of such material thus raises questions like: will the house built of traditional materials last? It could therefore be said that the use of traditional material is still questionable.

Most of the subjects that were asked about the housing in the area complained about the housing designs which lack cultural aspects that are suitable for the rural setting. The respondents also raised concerns about the battle that they will face when maintaining and extending their houses since most of the people depend on farming and child grants. They then prefer to use the material that is easily accessible and cheap to extend their houses. Their preferences were traditional houses built on material that is of high quality and durable so as to last for a long time. The main aim of the research is to get a better direction on rural development while maintaining their traditional way of life.

### **Effectiveness of rural housing policy**

The researcher managed to interview an assistant manager and a policy and research director from Provincial Housing Department. The researcher wanted to elicit information regarding the efficiency of the current rural housing policy in providing houses that meet the requirements of rural dwellers. The director reported that at present the position of rural housing policy does not mention anything about housing design in rural areas, let alone the appropriate design for rural dwellers. This gap shows that there is a need for revisiting the

policy towards more holistic options so as to cater for rural people. Their main priority is to provide shelter to the areas that have been disadvantaged from the past. The department provides adequate and standard housing for the rural poor. Housing project implementation should depend on the needs of a particular community instead of the general assumptions on their needs due to limited funds.

The way that rural housing policy can respond to the cultural needs of the beneficiaries is by incorporating the Amakhosi jurisdiction at national and provincial level so as to address rural issues. In rural areas, it is imperative to provide housing that satisfies the people who occupy them while at the same time takes into consideration the traditional settlement structure of rural areas that is social compact. Consequently, it can be easier for the developers to understand issues that suit rural settlement patterns and life style.

It was reported that the design that is appropriate for rural communities would be the kind of design that retains and incorporates traditional methods so as to show the difference between rural areas and townships. This refers to the use of urban type design in rural areas which is inappropriate because culture and history need to be kept alive at all times so as to be passed on from one generation to the other.

The current rural housing policy needs to formulate some new strategies so as to deal with rural development correctly since it has so many factors attached to it. Rural characteristics make it easier for the next generation to trace the history and tradition for their fore fathers through the traditional design used. The use of local material minimises the cost implications. Due to the lack of expertise, nothing has been documented on the appropriate rural housing design issue so therefore, it is imperative to discuss about such issues so as to draw attention to the decision makers to know exactly the

requirements that the developers must take into consideration when dealing with rural issues.

The Department of housing considers rural architecture as a national norm that needs to be highly respected at all times. Although there has been some problems relating to it since it is very difficult to identify the preferences of the rural communities, mostly because of some confusion caused by the fact that some of the community members have started to adopt the urban style of building. This has led to the design used at Mpukunyoni which leaves some doubts about the role of tribal authorities and community participation in the rural development. Community participation is one of the important tools of bringing about development in the communities as it encourages the community to be part of the development, and enables the developer to avoid implementing projects that do not meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

The beneficiary's response showed that housing development in rural areas is mostly based on infrastructure development. This development can have an impact on social, economic and environmental factors. Socially, it can result in an increase in the provision of adequate housing where for instance, fire risks are reduced.

### **Traditional Authority, law and development**

In rural areas, the tribal authority is a co-owner of the land. Since land stands as one of the key variables for sustainable housing delivery in South Africa, the tribal authority plays a crucial role in the development. According to Inkosi, the municipality and the traditional authority in the area are responsible for bringing about development in the area. The Traditional Authority relies mostly on effective community participation. The tribal authority is involved in all stages of development and also influences the decisions

undertaken. For instance, the department of housing decided on the housing design that they were going to use, which was 30m<sup>2</sup>. When they did a show house, the tribal authority and the community were not pleased about it and they then proposed another design which was much better than the first one as it was 41m<sup>2</sup>(three roomed house).The 30m<sup>2</sup> houses are mostly associated with the squatter settlements so this kind of design is not suitable for the rural places as it dehumanise rural dwellers. With regards to the satisfaction of beneficiaries, most respondents showed happiness in terms of the sizes of the subsidy houses, which is 41m<sup>2</sup>.

There are quite a number of factors that affect the rural housing design. The settlement patterns and structure in rural areas call for traditional architecture. This kind of design matches the rural setting as they have cultural beliefs that call for traditional type of housing where traditional practices takes place, for example slaughtering and communicating with the ancestors. The rural people's cultural beliefs associate rondavels with their ancestors. The availability of land also plays a very important role in keeping the history of the rural areas alive. Every household has cemeteries in their homesteads which make them reconnect with the dead. These aspects make rural areas differ from urban ones because of the rural characteristics that only suitable and fit tribal setting.

The housing design used is influenced by a number of things, which include affordability, durability, and quality. The housing projects where the government is the provider, tends to have some delays, like in Mpukunyoni the housing project is still in phase 1. The nature of the delays is caused by the insufficient budget, developer's inefficient use of resources and difficulties with land clearance (especially in tribal areas). The possible solution to speed the process would be to make local material available and durable to withstand tough weather. Another problem is with the municipal councillors who spread

rumours that they are the ones that are paying for the houses that people were getting, as opposed to the government. This is caused by the lack of information, effective communication and level of education by government structures.

House building does not only require the availability of land, building materials and the construction procedure as a whole. All of these are based on the question of affordability. Herlihy and Associates (1969) argue that the cost of building material based on the quality, value added to profit making and its transportation to the site. As a way of reducing the cost of building materials, the availability of local material becomes significant. The use of natural resources would mean that the people from the community will collect material at a cheaper price or no cost at all. For example, collecting thatched grass from the fields has no price attached, and making blocks at the nearby rivers can cost less, mostly because the labour would be done by local people. Consequently, using existing material has always been a way of building for the most traditional rural housing. Utilisation of local people can also avoid imposing a new lifestyle on the communities. Although in this case, professionals would still be needed to provide some insight in improving on what is already available in the community.

In rural areas, the tribal structures of governance are another problem hindering effective participation in rural housing development projects. The sidelining of these leaders has proved to be a very major obstacle towards rural housing and rural housing. It is still problematic to point out exactly which institution, is responsible for bringing on the rural development between the municipality and tribal authority. Other respondents from the housing officials' category mentioned that this is further exacerbated by the fact that the roles of traditional leaders in local government structures are not yet clarified. The councillors tend to view themselves as having more upper hand to

the rural communities. In some instances, development programmes tend to commence at a very fast pace and the completion is delayed due to disagreements between the two parties.

### **7.3. The beneficiaries' satisfaction on housing project implementation**

The main objective was to research the effectiveness of the housing projects in the field, to assess residents opinions regarding the provision of housing commonly used in urban areas in their existing homesteads. This was done so as to establish whether, despite providing urban design for residents, housing was satisfying people's needs as well as to research whether there was a need for the more holistic options to suit the rural structure.

The beneficiaries from Mpukunyoni area were interviewed using questionnaires with open-ended and closed questions, since they were involved in the implementation process of the Mpukunyoni Housing Project. The researcher spent days staying in the area so as to get to know the place, people and important leaders from the community like Inkosi Mkhwanazi, who is also the chairperson of the Mpukunyoni Development Committee and other role players.

This section looks at the responses to the questionnaires set by the researcher. The questionnaires are categorised and analysed per category. Thereafter, general and specific conclusions are drawn. The questionnaires were administered with 60 beneficiaries from Engqopheni and Nkombose area that have benefited from the rural housing subsidies and are currently occupying houses. The beneficiaries were randomly selected. The researcher chose 60 beneficiaries from 600 households since the main aim was to take 10 %( ratio) of the whole population to gather as much information as possible to ensure accuracy.

There were 600 houses that were built during the housing project implementation for the Mpukunyoni community. The researcher visited each household and interviewed them personally in their homesteads. This enabled the researcher to clarify some questions that were not understood. The researcher communicated well with the respondents since they spoke the same language, Zulu. The researcher was also well informed and knew the norms and values since she was familiar with rural areas where customs are regarded as a way of life. The interview schedule for the focus groups discussion was modified during the data collection process. The researcher was assisted by the fieldworker to introduce her to the beneficiaries since she was not from the area during data collection.

The researcher planned to use a tape recorder with all the respondents. It must be mentioned that other respondents were suspicious when the tape was used. When they were asked about how they feel about using the recorder, most of them said they were not comfortable because they suspected that their responses would be broadcasted somewhere without their knowledge. Therefore, the researcher decided to stop using a tape recorder so as to enable the respondents to express themselves freely. The researcher was also cautious about the influence of the background and traditional beliefs.

The responses were analysed in accordance with the categories, which allowed for the general and specific conclusions to be drawn. The background information entails a brief profile of the respondents that participated in answering the questionnaires.

The findings indicated that the majority of the respondents were from the age of 30 years old and above. This could be attributed to the fact that in rural areas old people are usually found at home since they are involved in the informal sector. Table 4 below show the exact numbers for the age group of respondents interviewed.

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0-19	5	8.3
20-29	10	16.7
30-39	15	25
40-49	15	25
50+	15	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4:** Age Group of the Respondents

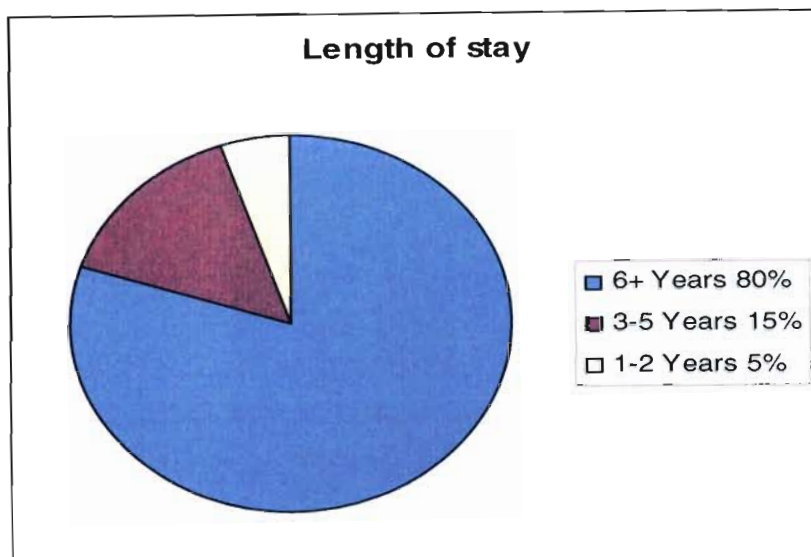
Table 5 below indicates that the majority of the respondents were women. This is caused by the fact that most women are heading their households in the absence of their husbands. Most men were not in their homes due to the lack of employment opportunities that have forced them to leave their homes and migrate to urban areas.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>NO. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	20	33
Female	40	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5:** Respondent's gender

The researcher was interested in finding out the period the respondents have lived at Mpukunyoni area. This was important for the researcher to have a clear understanding of the commitment of inhabitants, given the rate of hardships they encounter. The majority

of the residents were born in the area and do not planning to leave the place even in future.



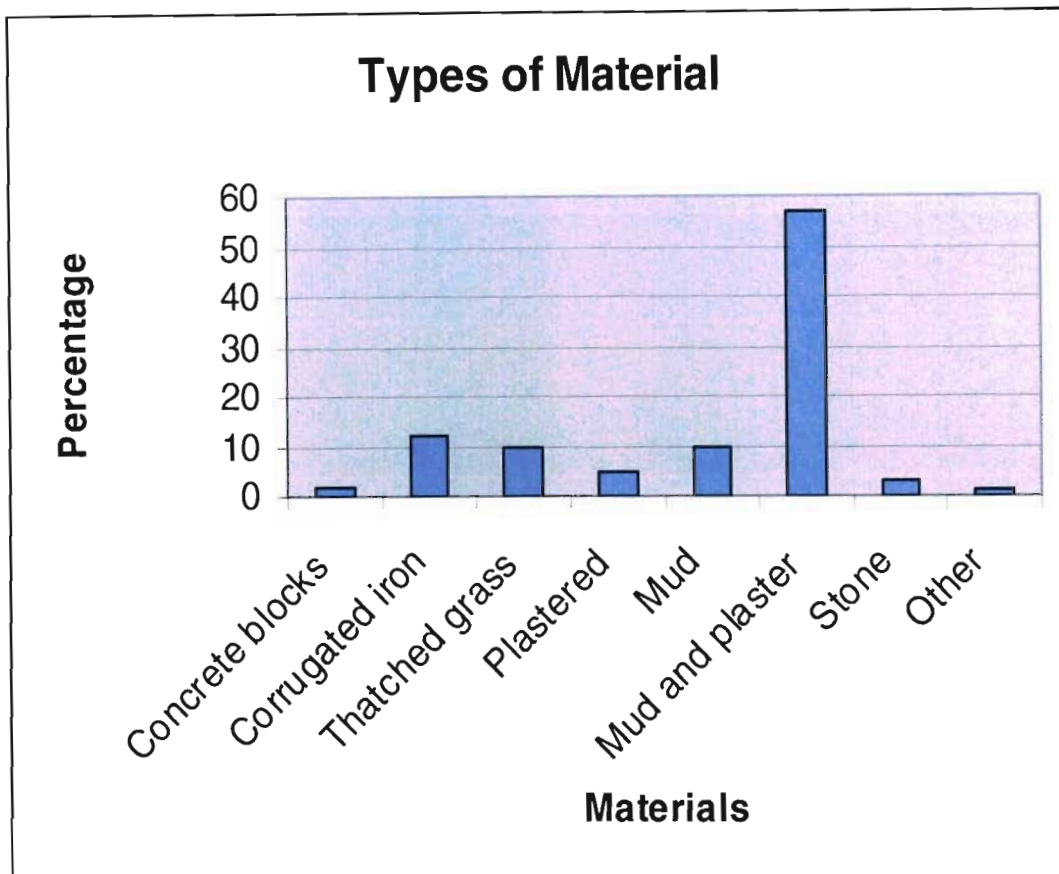
**FIGURE 7:** Length of Stay

Figure 7 revealed that the majority of the respondents have lived in the community for all their lives. 15% of the respondents came to live in the area because of marital relationships with the people from Mpukunyoni. Most respondents lived in extended families, where elders own the house living with their children and their grandchildren and the relatives too. Therefore, this indicates that families are large in terms of membership. Most family members were more than six in each household. In this case, the extended families were caused by children of the unmarried daughters. Overcrowding is then experienced if one compares the number of household members and the number of houses available. Rural areas consist of houses that are scattered around the yard and each one of them has its own function. For instance, in most cases rondavel is mostly used as a kitchen (ixhiba).

The respondents were quite happy with their houses because that had no intention of leaving the area where their forefathers and

parents lived and were buried. Those who work in urban areas still maintain ties with their families. Consequently, these people still find themselves connected to their ancestors and leaving the place would be like deserting them. That is why you find rondavels in most homesteads, which they commonly use for ritual practices. Even the traditional authority also confirmed that the main reason they build houses from the existing homesteads is due to the ancestral and, people solidly cannot be separated from their loved ones. This then is an important indicator of why indigenous architecture should be considered for rural areas. The respondents also reported that they depend on their child support grant and agricultural produce.

In Mpukunyoni, about 57% houses were plastered and made of mud. 12% of both traditional and urban housing used corrugated iron on the roof and 10% of the respondents still use thatched grass. The different building materials used for construction and maintaining the house is shown by figure 7 below. The figure shows the need for the rural development to make use of durable material types. This then challenges the developers to either make use of modern material that is a bit expensive, but durable to improve the traditional material that is easily accessible and affordable.



**Table 6:** Types of material used in Mpukunyoni

The village and home means a great deal to the respondents as they represent security, settlement, identity and roots. The male respondents emphasised the importance of traditional homes in the village as a means of continuity for the family and also to provide an identity for their children and the future generation to come.

The respondents still follow the traditional beliefs and believe they have to abide by. The settlement structure which consists of houses that are scattered and the traditional housing built, shows the uniqueness of the place compared to urban areas. One of the respondents made a comment that as she is a wife, she and her children and mother -in-law cannot stay in the same house. This is not culturally acceptable. Such comments are crucial to consider, especially when considering rural architecture. As already mentioned,

house structure does impact the maintenance of communal identity and values.

The respondents emphasized the role played by the traditional leaders in the area in as far as the allocation of land is concerned. The Inkosi is a custodian of the land and he holds rights to land with the help of izinduna. In Mpukunyoni, the '*khonza*' system is still applicable to both residents and people that are not originally from the area. This system gives people that do not own the land the permission to use it. The outsiders need to produce an official letter that states the location where come from, and also confirms that they can be trusted. The land is allocated by izinduna to the people who want to use the land; thereafter a report to the chief is made. The people are expected to pay a *khonza* fee, which is a once-off payment for land allocation. Many respondents have been in the area since birth and the land was given to them as an inheritance. In Mpukunyoni, land can now be accessed by anyone unlike before where mostly women were denied access to land. The woman would only have land through her husband. At Mpukunyoni, women are allowed to have their own plots, whether married or not. This act in itself shows the breakdown of one of the major barriers of access to land in rural areas especially.

All respondents felt it is vital for communities to participate in housing projects throughout the various stages of the project development. Burkey(1993:57) states the importance of community participation saying that participation is essentially a learning by doing exercise plans, and new plans so as to acquire skills that can be used during housing implementation.. The respondents indicated that they were involved in all stages of development. Emphasis was also laid on the traditional aspects of community's vis-à-vis the role of traditional leadership in the development projects in rural areas. It was further noted that the process of community involvement should not cease when the project is complete, after completion, the

community should take responsibility for maintaining and upgrading the created assets (Burkey, 1993).

The respondents that were interviewed were also invited to come for the group discussions so as to explore the underlying factors that influence rural architecture in depth. The participants for the focus groups were divided into three, the pensioners from 60-80 years, adults and the youth from the age of 17 and 59. Each group consisted of ten participants and were expected to share their thoughts and experiences concerning the appropriate design for rural people.

The elders reported that rural characteristics affect the housing design in the area. Such characteristics encompass the rural scenery, structure, culture and income. The respondents strongly felt that the housing that has been implemented do not contribute to local identity at all, as it compromises cultural aspect that define people. The only way in which the housing design can construct the cultural meaning for rural communities is to use design typologies that are culturally friendly and symbolic. Rural areas have separate buildings and each building has a specific purpose be it a kitchen, place to eat, sleep, sit and talk in the day and practice craftwork like weaving. The adoption of the urban type design in rural areas seems to be a threat and if forces one to think how this country would be in ten years time. This manipulates and hypnotises people into adopting other place's culture, and abandon what was originally theirs. The respondents strongly felt that rural areas and urban areas should be treated differently since there are many factors attached to each and one factor that cannot be ignored. The locality of the area gives a good feeling, for example, the rural people who stay in the urban areas because of work come back to their home lands. Since rural people disqualify to access individual subsidy that gives them full control of their housing design, therefore the housing subsidy implemented in Mpukunyoni require developers to understand the locality of the place

and its requirements so as to keep everybody happy at the end of the project.

The use of urban type design in rural areas was a problem for the pensioners. They felt as though developers and their grandchildren alike look down upon their cultural roots. They stated that they are fighting a losing battle in a sense. For them it was pointless to build housing made up of the urban architecture because it does not have great significance in their lives.

The middle-aged people appreciated the houses that have been implemented although there were still some justifiable concerns. In traditional places, houses are separated and have different and specific purposes. The houses that have been implemented using design suitable for urban dwellers tend to compromise a lot of things because the house is separated by walls which then questions privacy. Traditionally, houses are arranged in an orderly way. For example the houses for the mother in laws are separated from those of the sons, daughter-in-laws and children. It is not healthy to find the mother-in-law, her son and daughter-in-law, her grandson and his wife living in the same house simply divided by walls.

Although modern material is very desirable and durable, there are still some problems such as excessive cost involved that need special attention. The locality of the place and its needs varies and must be treated differently.

Economic, social, political and cultural factors affect rural housing in rural areas. The houses implemented do not contribute to local identity because there has been a shift in the housing design used. The houses that construct meaning would be traditional housing that still caters for rural people who are still attached to their cultures. The use of urban type design in rural areas shows the equality between

two places while at the same time minimise migration of people to urban areas because of being well serviced with water, sanitation and electricity. It is about time that rural areas move from being a conservative society into a flexible society that allows changes, just so as long as people's lives are improved for the better.

The youth liked the houses because of them being environmentally hygienic since they have enough ventilation unlike traditional houses that do not enough ventilation. The houses are also of a high standard. This will definitely prevent migration of people into urban areas as these houses already have proper electricity and sanitation.

The findings of this study address very sensitive and problematic issues with regard to stating housing type that is culturally suitable for rural dwellers that still live under the leadership of the tribal authorities '*Amakhosi*'. There are also socio-economic factors to be considered when trying to build a sustainable and viable rural society.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **8. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study was based on literature reviews, observations and interviews. The literature review provided the theoretical foundation which discussed thoroughly the relevant issues to be taken into cognisance when dealing with rural development. The main issue shows the importance of using vernacular dwellings in rural areas to reflect the uniqueness of the place and its history. Observation technique was used to recognise the relationship between non-verbal and verbal responses so as to tackle relevant issues exhaustively and to evoke reliable and valid conclusions of the study. The interviews offered some clarity on debatable and relevant factors that have contributed to the use of urban type design in rural areas. The study as a whole managed to follow through with its objectives. Most objectives were uncovered through a literature survey, while some evidence came from on-site observations. From the study, general and specific conclusions can be drawn.

There is a limited literature on rural housing since most information is urban biased. One may assume that is the reason why the designers find themselves adopting urban type designs in rural areas. However, it is still going to take a long time nevertheless some transformations have begun to emerge in rural development. The lack of relevant theoretical information on rural housing issues has hindered the progress that could have been achieved on the subject.

There have been many housing development projects taking place in rural areas, although most of them still lack proper planning and co-ordination at the highest decision making levels. This is mainly caused by the projects being biased and not integrated since they lack the necessary elements such as effective community participation for

sustainability. Rural needs and conditions differ fundamentally from urban needs. As a result, institutions and structures focussing on urban areas demonstrate their inability to accommodate different conditions of rural need. Therefore the integrated rural development approach is seen as a holistic approach as opposed to what has been a narrow housing focus, which development practitioners call an 'urban bias'. The Integrated White Paper, (1994) for KwaZulu-Natal sees a potential in rural development. It facilitates popular participation in the development process with a view of creating a vibrant civil society that is able to engage constructively in local development initiatives.

The government has formulated rural housing policies with an aim of addressing the housing backlog in South Africa. This shows the interest of the government in meeting the rural needs by providing housing for the rural poor, who have been disadvantaged previously. So far, the existing rural housing policy has some flaws since it does not address relevant factors such as culture and identity values that affect rural housing. The housing policy does not stress the importance of developing appropriate rural housing design. As a result urban type design has then been adopted in rural areas such as Mpukunyoni.

It can be concluded that in Mpukunyoni, all stakeholders and beneficiaries were consulted and involved when they were deciding on the housing design. However, due to financial constraints some priorities could not be met. For example, to build traditional housing that reflects rural people's lives and origin. Furthermore, even though the communities understood and articulated their specific priority needs and preference during the housing project implementation, it is still questionable and confusing just how they arrived to the use of urban type design. Most importantly, these communities still live under the leadership of the tribal authorities.

The findings indicated that the developers believed that the houses that are built using urban materials for construction are of high quality and durable. The style and type of appropriate housing that is desirable in tribal areas remains questionable. People in tribal areas are still having different opinions concerning the style and type of their houses. But it should be noted that what seems to be causing even more confusion is that almost all beneficiaries still want to be physically involved in building their homes and they still want to maintain their traditional style of building. The possible solution could be self-help housing and adopting the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh so as to recognise people's potential by being responsible for their own development.

The rural housing projects are closely linked to economic development initiatives. This then ensure that residents are attracted to remain in their areas of birth and thus contribute to the improvement of economic, social and cultural factors to develop their places. One may argue that the use of urban type design may have positive impact in terms of preventing people from migrating to urban areas, due to the housing design that shows equality between these places. Therefore, migration is one of the aspects that contribute to the change of rural patterns from the traditional architecture to the modern architecture.

The high rate of unemployment in the rural areas is still a problematic issue. This then is caused by the lack of development skills, inferior education and scarcity of job opportunities. Therefore, the development in agricultural villages (agrivillages) where agricultural development is the central concern can be the solution because of the availability of land. The use of local material for building such as mud brick, sticks and thatched grass makes it easier for people to maintain and even extend their houses depending on each one's affordability. Even though the government has managed to provide people with

shelter, it is still problematic to maintain and extend houses that are built using modern material because people do not have consistent income and skills. People are now caught between modern and traditional mechanisms shaping their lives.

It is imperative for rural designers, planners, and builders to be well equipped and understand the traditional built environment of the area in which they are working, so as to deal with the housing provision for the majority of the people in a way that responds to their social, cultural and economic circumstances. The subsidy housing built in Mpukunyoni shows the misunderstanding between what the beneficiaries think is culturally suitable for their tribal areas versus what the developers think rural people need. It is very imperative that the professionals understand the existing complex, interrelationships between individual family, community, religion, built form, social activities as well as the overall pattern of a typical rural development study. Such components cannot be compromised because that can lead to undesirable changes in family structure, behaviour and other aspects of culture. Therefore, the rural areas development concerns must target the specific group of people who must choose how to develop, plan, design, build and maintain the built environment. Furthermore, the appearance of the designed built form must respond to the present needs without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. Andersen (1978) suggests that perhaps new material has to be used with the same understanding and skill that is evident in the traditional use of organic materials. These therefore, symbolises progress and prosperity.

There is need for a certain criteria to be put in use when selecting rural developers. This will mean giving first priority to those with intensive knowledge on how to go about bringing about housing delivery in rural areas that favours local employment and their particular input to the community. The first priority need to be given

to people with the local talent and a clear understanding of socio-cultural factors considered when building for rural dwellers. The problem with outside developers is that they tend to misunderstand the needs for people they are building for. Therefore, there needs to be a reassessment of the practical virtues of traditional environment not to promote a sentimental, backward looking but to preserve the existing skills and knowledge of local materials so that the future built form may be suitable adjusted to the changes in lifestyle and agricultural practice while maintaining ecological integration and evading wasteful and some instances inappropriate use of modern industrially produced material.

The use of urban type design in rural areas reveals a cultural heritage of sophistication and ecological balance that has been ignored by the majority of professionals. These professionals use expensive solutions based on the use of prestigious modern material and techniques. Professionals need to study the ways in which rural communities have for generations provided their own housing using materials directly from their environment. This study of traditional forms and methods is set out to be a first step towards new generation of housing forms which will hopefully embody the lessons of integration of man, activity and environment.

Rural housing has received sufficient attention in Africa although it is an important aspect of bringing about sustainable development in rural areas. Planning authorities should try their best to respect and enhance rural housing design that reflects the lives of the people living in rural areas. It is also the developer's responsibility to ensure that after providing people with shelter, they then give them some means to sustain themselves so as to improve their lives. One may suggest that a strategy like People's Housing Process is presently the best to adopt because the process exposes people to various options towards building their homes. Such strategies also ensure that there is good

relationship with the traditional leaders so as to maintain the traditional culture of the tribe. The rural people need houses that they can bond with as also trace their history through them. Therefore, there is need to identify initiatives to be put in that facilitate the enabling approach to housing, which will ensure both short and long term goals.

Local governance systems and institutional set-ups play an important role in defining the nature of the relationship between urban and rural areas. There is still a need to situate this even in a broader context of national fundamental changes in social and economic structure. Another important aspect is to generate attractions in rural areas to make people realise that rural life can be satisfying as that in the cities. In the end, rural areas should be seen as having a positive contribution to the global economy. This desire can then create a more accountable system with better capacities to respond to the needs and priorities of the local populations. As a result, improved synergies between local government, NGOs, local civil society and private sector actors can play a key role in supporting the positive aspects of rural-urban interactions while reducing their negative impacts.

The rural housing implementation concept with regards to the design needs to be inspired through research carried out in the area of settlement patterns and housing form in traditional architecture so as to understand the principles and processes underlying built environment. The physical form and constructional methods reflect the living habits of relevant ethnic groups in relation to climatic conditions. The main concern for local government in South Africa is using building material and technologies that meet functional, safety and aesthetic standards which enables cost reduction and affordability. There is a need for thorough research on rural areas and inclusion of other attributes.

The government views housing as a social right that sees the needs of individual occupiers of housing to make a contribution so that they can have a say in their housing typologies. Housing calls for the combination of efforts of various role-players in the process. The extent of each role-player's input is then determined by the prevailing circumstances and environment in which they operate. Such circumstances are influenced by the economy of the country, politics, culture, history and many other things.

South African housing policy needs to be formulated in ways that are accommodative of the diverse situations of the people to whom it is directed and sensitive towards their experiences and understanding of rural living. The chapter recommends that the policy makers need to move away from the narrow conception of housing which simply entails provision of core shelter and concentrate efforts on creating liveable environments in conjunction with socio-cultural and economic characteristics of the beneficiaries. After examining some obstacles to effective housing delivery in the present policy, one may conclude that to be more effectual South African housing policy needs to be formulated in ways that acknowledge cultural, social, and economic differences of the people it ought to serve. The new rural housing policy needs a thorough understanding of the context of rural issues. The multi-faceted nature of housing needs in rural areas should be taken into consideration. The integration of housing development strategies can also be considered on formulating a rural housing policy.

The gap within the rural housing policy can be bridged by incorporating the tribal authorities fully in the policy decision making at local, provincial and national level. The tribal authorities can then play a very important role in addressing the real needs for their people. Consequently, housing policy should no longer be centered on the provision of shelter, but should be centered on the holistic

provision of appropriate rural housing that contribute to local identity, which then takes into consideration people's culture, origin, lifestyle and other important economic development initiatives.

Rural people need to be encouraged to participate actively in the decision making process and by so doing, they are able to make informed decisions that affect their lives and improve their economic situation. Rural people need to contribute to planning, design and implementation of their housing project, and assist with monitoring and evaluating the usefulness and success of the project. There should be an ongoing process of discussion with the stakeholders involved. For development to be viewed as holistic and dynamic it must put people at the centre so as to build on their inherent potential by considering social, economic and environmental sustainability of the houses built for the rural communities. The development must also involve people of varying socio-economic status, occupation and skills level, varying level of education, ambition, awareness and enlightenment.

In order to bring a holistic approach to the rural housing delivery process, the incorporation of the local and tribal authorities need to be ensured. These two players really need to form fruitful partnership since they have power to influence decisions made to protect their beneficiaries and keep them satisfied about their housing. This therefore, sees the need for the rural housing project to shift from focussing solely on the top structure rather than the housing in totality. The holistic approach allows the community to give their views on factors that affect their lives whether is it in the short or long run and to incorporate appropriate contextual rural housing designs.

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## **INTERNET WEBSITES**

<http://disa.nu.ac.za/articledisplaypage.asp?articletitle=Housing+the+homeless%3A+an+imperative&filename=BSJan91>

<http://www.policy.org.za/govdocs.white.papers/housing.html>

<http://www.grameen.com>

<http://www.accessone.com>

# ***APPENDICES***

# **INTERVIEWS WITH HOUSING OFFICIALS**

## **PROCESS, MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURES IN RURAL HOUSING PROJECTS**

You are asked to assist in responding to this interview questions, which is part of the research project. Please note that this is done voluntarily, therefore you are not entitled to respond to all questions. Your work positions will be used. Please note that this exercise is for academic purposes.

## **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH THE PROJECT MANAGER FROM MPUKUNYONI AREA**

### **Management and design in rural housing project**

1. Position held?
2. What is your involvement in the delivery process of rural housing?
3. Which members of the community should participate in rural housing projects and Why?
4. What is the relationship between local and tribal authorities in rural housing projects?
5. In projects, what is your institution's opinion towards traditional architecture?
6. What factors/issues influence housing design in rural areas?
7. Does the housing that has been implemented contribute to local identity?
8. How did you choose the housing design that has been used?
9. Which housing design is most appropriate for rural communities?
10. How can housing design construct cultural meaning for rural communities?

11. Does the community participation influence the choice of housing in rural areas?
12. What have been major constraints towards housing development in tribal areas?
13. Can you suggest guidelines for developing a more appropriate rural housing that is suitable for rural communities who still live under tribal authority?

## **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH DIRECTOR (POLICY) FROM HOUSING DEPARTMENT**

### **Rural housing policy and design**

1. Position held?
2. What does the current rural housing policy say about developing appropriate rural housing design?
3. How can rural housing delivery system under current housing policy respond to the cultural needs and values of the rural communities?
4. How can rural housing policy ensure that developers understand issues that fit rural setting by considering the needs of people, their sense of belonging and lifestyles?
5. What is appropriate design for rural communities?
6. What possible strategies can be formulated by the rural housing policy to make developers aware and respect people's culture when packaging rural housing projects?

## **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH THE TRIBAL AUTHORITY FROM MPUKUNYONI**

### **Role of tribal authority and participation**

1. Who is responsible for bringing about community development in your area?
2. What roles do traditional leaders play in making input on matters that affect your area?
3. In which stages of planning and development do you get involved?
4. What is your involvement in the delivery process of rural housing?
5. What is the relationship between tribal and local leaders in rural housing projects?
6. How effective has participation of traditional leaders in housing typology that has been implemented in Mpukunyoni area?

### **Rural housing design and identity**

7. In housing projects, what is your opinion towards traditional architecture?
8. What issues affect rural housing design in rural areas?
9. Does the housing that has been implemented contribute to local identity?
10. How did you choose the housing design that has been used?
11. Which housing design is more appropriate for rural communities?
12. How can housing design construct cultural meaning for rural communities?

13. What have been major constraints towards the development of housing that contribute to local identity?
14. Can you suggest guidelines for developing a more appropriate rural housing that is suitable for rural communities who still live under tribal authority?

## **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

### **Rural housing design and community participation**

1. What issues affect rural housing design in rural areas?
2. Does the housing that has been implemented contribute to local identity?
3. How can housing design construct cultural meaning for rural communities?
4. Which housing is more appropriate for rural communities?
5. What do you feel about the use of housing design that is suitable for urban areas in rural areas?
6. Can you suggest guidelines for developing a more appropriate rural housing that is suitable for rural communities who still live under tribal authority?

## **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE BENEFICIARIES**

You are asked to assist in responding to this questionnaire, which is part of a research project. Please mark your answers with the boxes provided and feel free to write where there is a fill-in space. Please note, that this is done voluntarily, therefore you are not obligated to fill/ answer all questions. Names will be kept confidential when required. Please note that his exercise is for academic purposes.

Closed and open-ended questions

### **Demographic information**

1. Age

0 -19	
20-29	
30-39	
40-49	
50+	

2. Gender

Male	
Female	

3. Were you born in this area?

Yes	
No	

4. How long have you been staying in Mpukunyoni?

1 year	
2-3 years	
4-5 years	
6 and above	

5. Do you live in nuclear or extended family?

Yes	
No	

6. Do you have close blood relatives in this area?

Yes	
No	

**Type of building materials**

7. What type of building material do you use in your houses?

Concrete bricks	
Corrugated iron	
Thatched grass	
Plastered	
Mud and plaster	
Stones	
Other	

**Identity and cultural issues**

8. What do you understand about the representation of cultural meaning in housing?

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9. a. Does housing that has been implemented contribute to local identity?

Yes	
No	

b. If it does/ does not, how?

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10. Is this housing typology appropriate to people's culture, lifestyle and tradition?

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11. If not, what factors/ issues can contribute to appropriate design for rural communities?

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**Rural housing and satisfaction**

12. How best can community participation influence the choice of housing in rural areas?

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13. What needs to be improved so as to ensure a holistic approach in rural housing projects?

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